



Peace & Justice Update
July 23, 2004
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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.

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UPDATE SOURCE ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	=	Agence France Presse (www.afp.com)
AP	=	Associated Press (www.ap.org)
AllAfrica	=	AllAfrica Global Media (www.allAfrica.com)
AI	=	Amnesty International (www.amnesty.org)
Balkan News	=	Balkan News (www.balkannews.net)
BBC	=	British Broadcasting Corporation (news.bbc.co.uk)
BBC Monitoring	=	BBC Monitoring International Reports (www.monitor.bbc.co.uk/)
BCG	=	Balkan Crisis Group (www.iwpr.net)
Channel NewsAsia	=	Channel NewsAsia (www.channelnewsasia.com)
CPJ	=	Committee to Protect Journalists (www.cpj.org)
Economist	=	Economist (www.economist.com)
EUObserver	=	EUObserver.Com (www.euobserver.com)
ECHR	=	European Court of Human Rights (www.echr.coe.int)
FT	=	Financial Times (www.ft.com)
GlobalSecurity	=	GlobalSecurity (www.globalsecurity.org)
HRW	=	Human Rights Watch News (www.hrw.org)
ICC	=	International Criminal Court (www.icc-cpi.int/php/index.php).
ICG	=	International Crisis Group (www.crisisweb.org)
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
IWPR	=	Institute for War and Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net)
Kantipur Online	=	Kantipur Online (www.kantipuronline.com)
Monitor	=	The Monitor (www.monitor.co.ug)
MRG	=	Minority Rights Group International (www.minorityrights.org)
LA Weekly	=	Latin American Weekly Report (www.latinnews.com/lwr)
Latinnews Daily	=	LatinNews Daily (www.latinnews.com)
Le Monde	=	Le Monde (www.lemonde.fr)
Los Angeles Times	=	Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com .)
Nepali Times	=	Nepali Times (www.nepalitimes.com)
Nepal News.Com	=	Nepal News.Com (www.nepalnews.com)
NewKerala.Com	=	NewKerala.Com (www.newkerala.com)
New Vision	=	The New Vision (www.newvision.co.ug)
NCN	=	New Congo Net (www.marekinc.com/NCN.html)
NYT	=	The New York Times (www.nytimes.com)
Ottawa Citizen	=	The Ottawa Citizen (www.ottawacitizen.com)
Reuters	=	Reuters (www.reuters.com)
RSF	=	Reporters Sans Frontières (www.rsf.org)
Sudan Tribune	=	The Sudan Tribune (www.sudantribune.com)
UN News Center	=	UN New Center Homepage (www.un.org)
UN News Wire	=	UN News Wire (www.unwire.org)
U.S. Dept. of State	=	U.S. Department of State (www.state.gov)
UPI	=	United Press International (www.upi.com)
VOA	=	Voice of America (www.voanews.com)
Washington Times	=	The Washington Times (www.washintontimes.com)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency(www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)

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ANDES

ARGENTINA

Judge orders 12 arrests for Operation Condor: Judge Jorge Urso issued arrest warrants July 19 for former Interior Minister Eduardo Harguindeguy and 11 other former officers who served under ex-dictator Jorge Videla. The arrest warrants were issued for involvement in Operation Condor's repressive campaigns during the 1976 to 1983 military dictatorship. Operation Condor was a cooperative intelligence effort between numerous right-wing governments in the region to eliminate left-wing dissidents. Violence, torture, and disappearances of suspected dissidents were justified as necessary in the fight against communism. The charges against the 12 officials included crimes against humanity, kidnapping, and murder and were the first indictments to be issued against former members of the Videla government. (AFP, Latinnews Daily, July 13, 2004)

BOLIVIA

Bolivians vote to allow gas exports: Bolivians overwhelmingly supported Carlos Mesa's July 18 referendum on natural gas. President Mesa staked his presidency on questions concerning foreign ownership and increased royalties on Bolivia's natural gas reserves, estimated to be the second largest in Latin America. Despite calls from indigenous leaders and major unions to boycott the elections and nationalize the gas industry, Bolivians voted to continue allowing exportation and foreign ownership of natural gas wells as long as Bolivia increased its share of royalties from 18 to 50 percent. The referendum was to ease tensions between the Spanish-descended elite and the impoverished Indian majority who felt that revenues from natural resource extraction had not benefited their communities in the past. Former President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada was forced out of office last October after his plan to export natural gas to Mexico and the U.S. caused popular unrest and rioting. (AFP, AP, July 19, 2004)

COLOMBIA

FARC rejects peace talks: The Marxist rebels of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) said July 19 that they would not participate in peace negotiations as long as President Uribe was in control. The FARC stated they would be ready to undertake peace talks with a new administration interested in creating a lasting peace and social justice for all Colombians. President Alvaro Uribe, a conservative whose mandate ends in August 2006, said that he would be willing to open peace talks only if the FARC rebels agreed to a unilateral cease-fire. Uribe has enjoyed significant popularity for his hard-line stance against the rebels and his administration has insisted that mounting losses by the FARC would force them to the negotiating table in less than two years. The FARC have been fighting to displace the Colombian government and install a Marxist regime for more than 40 years. (AP, Xinhua, July 20, 2004)

VENEZUELA

Government offers amnesty to captured Colombians: Venezuela offered to grant amnesty to 14 of the 102 Colombians detained outside of Caracas in May. President Hugo Chavez accused the Colombian detainees of collaborating with domestic opposition to overthrow his government. The Colombian nationals were charged with rebellion by the Venezuelan military but 14 were offered amnesty when they agreed to cooperate with military authorities. Opponents of the President insisted that the arrests were a ploy intended to turn attention away from the August 15 presidential referendum. Colombian diplomats, however, stated that they believed the detainees had ties to outlawed paramilitary forces in Colombia. The Colombians were arrested May 9 on a farm outside of Caracas and have been accused by Chavez of conspiring to overthrow his government. Controversy over the situation arose when reports claimed the detained Colombians were unarmed and had legal entry documents approved by the Venezuelan government. (AP, July 13, 2004)

BALKANS

SERBIA

Authorities arrest Djindjic murder suspect: Dejan Milenkovic, a main suspect in the March 2003 assassination of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic, was arrested by authorities July 16 in Thessaloniki, Greece. He was to remain in Greek custody until Serbia filed an extradition request which, by Greek law, must be done within 50 days. Milenkovic, was allegedly part of the Zemun Clan, the largest criminal group in Serbia. Serbian authorities believed the Prime Minister's assassination was part of an attempt to overthrow the government. The 13 men charged with the assassination were believed to have been upset with Djindjic's cooperation with the war crimes tribunal at The Hague and his declared war on organized crime. (AP, BBC, July 17, 2004)

CROATIA

Court indicts Croatian Serb leader: The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia at The Hague indicted Goran Hadzic on 14 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his involvement in the 1991 to 1995 Croatian war. The chief prosecutor at The Hague requested Serbia's full cooperation July 19 and warned that she would inform the UN Security Council if Serbia did not arrest Hadzic within hours. Hadzic was president of the short-lived Republic of Serb Krajina which revolted in 1991 against Croatia's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia. Within one year, nearly 80,000 non-Serb residents were forcibly removed, deported, or killed from Krajina by the dominant Serb majority. Croatia's declaration caused conflict with Serbs who wished to remain part of Yugoslavia. (Balkannews, July 16, 19, 2004)

GENDER AND PEACE

U.S. withdraws funding for UNFPA: The U.S. State Department said July 16 that the U.S. has decided to withhold funding to the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) for the third consecutive year due to the agency's alleged support for coercive abortions in China, which violated the Kemp-Kasten Amendment. The Amendment was passed in 1985 to prevent U.S. foreign aid from going to programs that promoted coercive abortions or forced sterilization. Dismissing such allegations, the UNFPA issued a statement July 16 expressing its regret of the U.S. decision to withhold \$34 million appropriated by Congress for the agency. In an attempt to dispell U.S. accusations, the UNFPA indicated that a 2002 State Department fact-finding mission found no evidence to support the allegations against the Fund. The UNFPA statement also cited the findings of three other independent teams commissioned by the UN, the British Parliament and a multi-faith panel of religious leaders, which reached a similar conclusion as the State Department report. Thoraya Ahmed Obaid, Executive Director of UNFPA, said that the denied contribution could have prevented an estimated 2 million unwanted pregnancies, 4,700 maternal deaths, and over 77,000 infant and child deaths. UNFPA, working in nearly 140 countries, was set up to increase access to reproductive health services including family planning, the promotion of safe motherhood, the prevention of unintended pregnancies, sexually transmitted infections, and HIV/AIDS. The U.S. was the only country that withheld funding to UNFPA for non-budgetary reasons. (UNFPA, July 9; UN News Center, July 16; UN News Wire, July 19, 2004)

SIERRA LEONE

Conference addresses gender practices: The Women's Wing of the Sierra Leone Labor Congress began a two-day National Gender Conference July 12 in Freetown, the country's capital city. Financially supported by the Northern Trade Union Congress in the UK, the conference aimed to create a strategic plan of action against Sierra Leone's discriminatory gender practices. The major areas that conference participants discussed included women's labor rights, the role of women in trade unions, and women and HIV/AIDS in the workplace. At the conclusion of the conference, the participants presented a set of recommendations which included appropriate measures to guarantee equal access to employment for women. (AllAfrica, July 16, 2004)

GREAT LAKES

RWANDA

UN finds government complicit in DRC invasions: A UN panel investigating Rwanda's involvement in a recent invasion by former members of the Rally for the Congolese Democracy-Goma (RCD-Goma) rebel group in eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) found that Rwanda supported the rebels, violating a UN Security Council arms embargo from 2003. According to UN experts, the Rwandan government reportedly hid arms caches, recruited, and sheltered rebel troops who occupied Bukavu between May 28 and June 8. A number of Congolese refugees living in Rwanda testified that they were offered the equivalent of \$100 or cell phones to join the troops, while other refugees said they were forced to join. Rwanda's Minister for Regional Cooperation

denied that the government had helped, trained, or recruited the rebels, calling the reports completely false. Rebel troops under the command of former RCD-Goma leader Gen. Nkunda invaded Bukavu following reports that the DRC army had persecuted ethnic Tutsis. The rebels eventually withdrew and fled to Rwanda following clashes with the DRC army. During the DRC civil war between 1998 and 2002, Rwanda and other countries backed rebel troops including RCD-Goma in the DRC. Many rebel militias were integrated into the DRC national army following the war but some groups like RCD-Goma continued to be active in eastern DRC. (IRIN, UN News Center, July 21, 2004)

Parliamentary commission recommends termination of rights groups: Three international human rights organizations asked parliament July 13 to reject a recommendation that six of the country's human rights groups be dissolved. Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, and African Rights issued separate statements in an attempt to save the national groups who were threatened by the potential decision. Following the decision, six officials from one group, the Rwandan League for Promotion and Defense of Human Rights, fled the country fearing they would be arrested. The national human rights groups, many of which criticized government policies of banning ethnicity, were accused of subscribing to and distributing a genocide ideology. Following independence from Belgian rule in 1957, the minority Tutsis governed the majority Hutus, eventually leading to the 1994 genocide in Rwanda when more than 937,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed by extremist Hutu militia and elements of the Rwandan army. Current Rwandan law prohibits the promotion of any divisionist activity, including ethnic divisions. (Amnesty, July 6; IRIN, July 13, 15, 2004)

UGANDA

Army captures senior LRA commander: The Ugandan People's Defense Force (UPDF) captured Brigadier Kenneth Banya July 14. Banya was the most senior advisor to Joseph Kony, the leader of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Ministers for the Security of the State and Northern Uganda Rehabilitation met with Banya and other LRA defectors in Gulu to discuss the LRA's situation. Banya said he would work with the UPDF to help end the war as soon as possible and spoke on the radio July 15 to call for a cease-fire and spread the message of amnesty. According to Banya, Kony had transferred power to his deputy, Vincent Otti, in April, leaving Kony with 50 LRA fighters in southern Sudan where he was hosted by the Sudanese military. The LRA, based in southern Sudan, has waged an 18-year civil war against the Ugandan government, attacking villages in the north and forcing abducted children to fight. The war has displaced more than 1.6 million people. (IRIN, Monitor, July 15; Monitor, New Vision, July 22; New Vision, July 20, 2004)

HORN OF AFRICA

SOMALIA

New parliament to be inaugurated: Mediators at the Kenyan peace talks announced that the transitional federal parliament was to be inaugurated July 30. Each of Somalia's four major clans were assigned 61 seats and an alliance of minority clans was given 31. Each

of these groups was to nominate their representatives by July 20. The parliament was to elect a speaker and two deputy speakers who would eventually choose the country's president. Somalia has been without a functioning central government since the 1991 overthrow of Muhammad Siad Barre's regime. Peace talks sponsored by the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development began in October 2002. (AllAfrica, IRIN, July 19, 2004)

Mogadishu hospital reopens: After 13 years under the control of a militia, the Banadir hospital reopened with the independent financing of Somali businessmen. The militia agreed to the reopening after negotiations with Women of the Peace Frontier, which assisted in refurbishing the building for its reopening. The hospital was to provide free health care to women and children. Since 1991, rival factions have controlled most of the state's now-deteriorated infrastructure. (BBC, July 16, 2004)

SUDAN

Sudanese court sentences Janjawid militiamen: Ten members of the Janjawid militia were captured during recent clashes with local police in the South Darfur capital of Nyala and were sentenced by a Nyala court for their part in attacks on the citizens of Darfur. Their sentence included having a foot and a hand amputated according to Sudan's interpretation of Islamic Sharia law, as well as six years in prison for charges including murder and robbery. These were the first convictions against the government-supported Arab militia. The militia began its attacks in February 2003 against Darfur rebel groups, the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) and the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA), who took up arms against the government to demand political representation in the peace process and access to state resources. Thousands have died and more than a million have fled their homes since the attacks began. (BBC, SudanTimes, July 19, 2004)

Peace talks between government and Darfur rebels end: Talks that began July 15 between the Sudanese government and the two main rebel groups of Darfur ended July 18 with the rebel groups walking out. The talks, mediated by the African Union, were held in the Ethiopian capital Addis Ababa. Government delegates met only with mediators and not with representatives of either the JEM or SLA. Rebels from both groups claimed they would not hold a political dialogue with the government until it agreed to their conditions, including disarming the Janjawid militia and allowing an international inquiry into charges of genocide against non-Arab Sudanese in Darfur. A government spokesperson stated that the demands were unacceptable, leading rebels to blame the collapse of the talks on the government. (BBC, July 18; IRIN, July 19, 2004)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

SUDAN

Use of rape as a weapon of war: Sudanese Janjawid militiamen have allegedly used rape as a weapon of war in Darfur according to a July 19 report by Amnesty International. The report noted the rape of young girls and women in a campaign to drive black Africans from the Darfur region. The year-old conflict between Darfur rebel groups and the government supported militia has led to some 30,000 deaths, 1.2 million internally

displaced persons, and at least 130,000 people living as refugees on the Chadian border. Rape as a weapon of war was prohibited by international humanitarian law, including Article 4 of the Second Protocol to the Geneva Convention Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts. Although a universal jurisdiction exists to prosecute those responsible for rape in international conflicts, the right and obligation to prosecute perpetrators in internal conflicts, lies with the authorities of the country in which it was committed. ([AI](#), [BBC](#), July 19, 2004)

UZBEKISTAN

U.S. freezes aid: The U.S. froze economic aid to Uzbekistan July 13 due to a lack of progress toward human rights and democratic reforms. Uzbekistan had previously received tens of millions of dollars in U.S. aid annually since 2001, when it granted U.S. forces access to a major airbase near the Afghan border. Under the Financial Year 2004 Foreign Operations Appropriations Act, U.S. aid was conditional upon a determination by the Secretary of State that Uzbekistan had made sufficient progress in the areas of human rights, democratic and economic reforms. Secretary of State Powell reportedly found Uzbekistan's reform record insufficient to certify the country for aid. Last year Uzbekistan was decertified for aid under the Cooperative Threat Reduction Program by the U.S. Department of State due to a lack of progress toward ending police torture and other abuses. A State Department spokesman emphasized that Uzbekistan remained an important partner to the U.S., and outlined progress by Uzbekistan in democratization and respect for human rights as essential to reinforcing the relationship. ([AFP](#), [HRWNews](#), July 14, 2004)

NEPAL

Government forms peace talks committee: Nepal's Minister for Information and Communication Mohammad Mohsin announced the formation of a peace talks committee. The decision to form the committee was made at a cabinet meeting July 19. The government called on all political parties, Nepali citizens, and the international community to support its efforts for "result-oriented" dialogue with the Maoists. The government said it would not give up multiparty democracy or constitutional monarchy as they were components of the current constitution. The government also said they were not in a position to immediately declare a cease-fire. Maoist leader Prachanda said his party would not hold talks within the framework of the 1990 constitution and that there was no possibility for an immediate cease-fire or talks unless the government would allow for the creation of a constituent assembly and UN mediation to solve the armed conflict. The government of Nepal and Maoist rebels already held two rounds of peace talks which failed in both 2001 and 2003. The Maoists are calling for an assembly to rewrite the current constitution and institute a communist state. The conflict in Nepal has claimed the lives of more than 9,000 people since it began in 1996. ([Kantipur Online](#), [Nepalnews.com](#), July 19; [Nepalnews.com](#), July 18, 21, 2004)

Government announces 2004-2005 budget: Finance Minister Bharat Mohan Adhikary unveiled a new budget aimed at reducing poverty and marginally increasing security spending. The budget will rely on international foreign aid for about one third of the total

budget. Adhikary did not elaborate, but said a number of new measures directed at boosting agriculture and reducing poverty would be crucial to tackling the Maoist insurgency. Nearly 40 percent of Nepal's 24 million people, most of them farmers, earn less than a dollar per day. (BBC, July 19, 2004)

WEST AFRICA

GHANA

Reconciliation Commission ends hearings: After 18 months of listening to more than 2,000 accounts of human rights violations, Ghana's National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) completed public hearings. The NRC was to draft a set of recommendations that would help the country overcome its legacy of military dictatorships that ruled Ghana for most of its 47 years as an independent country. The NRC, set up under current President John Kufuor, began its human rights investigation in 2003 and has drawn upon more than 2,000 witnesses to establish an accurate, complete, and historic record of human rights violations inflicted by people linked to the state. The witnesses included former president Jerry John Rawlings, who ruled the country from 1979 to 2000 after serving two successive terms. Rawlings was ordered to testify about his alleged role in the killing of political opponents in the 1980s before. Costing an estimated \$5 million, critics expressed their skepticism on the outcomes of the NRC. Rawlings' party, the National Democratic Congress, accused President Kufuor of using the NRC as an election tool ahead of presidential and parliamentary polls at the end of the year. The NRC had the investigative powers of a high court, but was not mandated to bring charges against suspected perpetrators or sentence them. The testimonies collected over the last 18 months would be the basis of recommendations that would be incorporated into national legislation before the end of the year. (IRIN, July 15, 2004)

LIBERIA

UN to restore security for upcoming elections: The UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) promised to create a secure environment for the elections scheduled to take place at the end of the year. Since its deployment, UNMIL has focused on the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants, the restructuring of the Liberian police force, and fostered conditions in which people could cast their votes without fear of intimidation. UNMIL, established by the Security Council September 19, 2003 was deployed to support the implementation of the cease-fire agreement and the peace process. The upcoming election would be a key stage in advancing implementation of the 2003 cease-fire agreement. The conflict in Liberia, which began in 1989, officially ended in August 2003 a few weeks after former President Charles Taylor went into exile in Nigeria. The peace agreement, signed August 18, 2003 in Accra, established a two-year power-sharing government intended to lead Liberia into elections. (UN News Center, July 17, 2004)

Government strives for more women in police force: After attending an opening ceremony to mark the start of the UN international police force's 10-month training course in Monrovia, Gyude Bryant, president of Liberia's transitional government, expressed his disappointment at the low number of women applying to join the country's new police force. Out of 150 police cadets that would participate in the training, only 10

of them were women. Calling for more women to join the new police force, Bryant indicated that the police force should not be a vocation exclusively for males and urged Liberian women's groups to encourage more females to enlist. Mark Kroeker, the UN police commissioner in Liberia, also highlighted that the new force should be more equally balanced in terms of gender. Liberia's old police force, which served under former president Charles Taylor, was known for corruption and brutality and was charged with arbitrary detention, torture, and extrajudicial killings. In an attempt to overcome the legacy of the Taylor era within the police force, UNMIL has launched the police training unit that would prepare approximately 1,900 members of Liberia's new force by the end of this year. ([IRIN](#), July 12, 2004)

SIERRA LEONE

Special court holds talks on Charles Taylor: A delegation from the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) has returned from a mission to neighboring Liberia after holding talks with government leaders about Charles Taylor, the former president who was granted political asylum in Nigeria. Robin Vincent, SCSL Registrar, stated July 16 that Gyude Bryant, president of the country's transitional government, seemed to change his position on Taylor's extradition to the Court. At the meeting with Vincent, Bryant promised to fully support bringing Taylor to justice in Freetown, where the Court was located. Since April, Bryant has repeatedly said that Taylor's presence in Nigeria was part of Liberia's peace process and no request would be made to extradite Taylor to Freetown. Taylor, who fled to Nigeria in August 2003, faced a 17-count indictment for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the 14-year conflict in Sierra Leone, which claimed more than 50,000 lives and displaced an estimated one million people. The SCSL, set up in 2002 under an agreement between Sierra Leone and the UN, was created to try those who bore greatest responsibility for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone after November 30, 1996. ([UN News Center](#), July 16, 2004)