



Peace & Justice Update
July 30, 2004
(Volume 9, Number 6)

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 Summer 2004 interns at the Joan B. Kroc Institute for Peace & Justice at the University of San Diego. The interns are Jeff Achen (University of North Dakota), Donna Chung (University of San Diego), Brian Israel (University of California, San Diego), Jared Leiderman (Swarthmore College), Natasha Mikha (University of Notre Dame), and Nicole Thompson (University of California, 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)
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)
FT	=	Financial Times (www.ft.com)
GlobalSecurity	=	GlobalSecurity (www.globalsecurity.org)
Guardian	=	Guardian Unlimited Network (www.guardian.co.uk/)
Hirondelle	=	Hirondelle News Agency (www.hirondelle.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)
IHT	=	International Herald Tribune (www.iht.com)
IRIN	=	Integrated Regional Information Network (www.irinnews.org)
Irish Times	=	The Irish Times (www.ireland.com)
IWPR	=	Institute for War and Peace Reporting (www.iwpr.net)
Kantipur Online	=	Kantipur Online (www.kantipuronline.com)
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)
Los Angeles Times	=	Los Angeles Times (www.latimes.com .)
Le Monde	=	Le Monde (www.lemonde.fr)
Monitor	=	The Monitor (www.themonitor.co.ug)
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)
Santiago Times	=	The Santiago Times (www.tcgnews.com/santiagotimes)
Scotsman	=	The Scotsman (www.scotsman.com)
Sudan Tribune	=	The Sudan Tribune (www.sudantribune.com)
UN News Center	=	UN New Center Homepage (www.un.org)
UN Wire	=	UN Wire (www.unwire.org)
U.S. Dept. of State	=	U.S. Department of State (www.state.gov)
USAID	=	U.S. Agency for International Development (www.usaid.gov)
UPI	=	United Press International (www.upi.com)
Washington Times	=	The Washington Times (www.washintontimes.com)
Xinhua	=	Xinhua News Agency (www.xinhuanet.com/english/index.htm)

UPDATE SUMMARY

ANDES

COLOMBIA

Rebels kidnap Catholic bishop; FARC is willing to reconsider peace talks

BALKANS

BOSNIA

Symbolic bridge reopens

MACEDONIA

Protests erupt over ethnic Albanian rights

SERBIA

Court considers dividing Milosevic trial

GENDER AND PEACE

UN urges inclusion of women in Iraqi transitional process

GREAT LAKES

BURUNDI

Political parties boycott talks

RWANDA

Government replaces judges

UGANDA

LRA attacks villages in Sudan

HORN OF AFRICA

SUDAN

Darfur rebels agree to new talks

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

MEXICO

Government charges former president with genocide

SUDAN

U.S. Congress labels Darfur crisis as genocide

NEPAL

Government to hold peace talks; Maoists disrupt education; USAID pledges funds for peace and development

WEST AFRICA

COTE D'IVOIRE

Peace talks to resume

LIBERIA

Taylor's asylum trial begins

SIERRA LEONE

Repatriation ends

ANDES

COLOMBIA

Rebels kidnap Catholic bishop: The Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN), the smaller of the two main leftist rebel groups, abducted a Catholic bishop July 25 near the town of Morcote. After kidnapping Misael Vacca Ramirez, the bishop of Yopal, ELN forces informed the Church that Bishop Ramirez would be released with a message for the Colombian government. More than 1,000 soldiers were dispatched by the Colombian army which drove the abductors deep into the jungle and forced the premature release of Bishop Ramirez. The bishop was unharmed and never received a political message from ELN high command. The ELN did, however, send an open letter to the president of Colombia's senate on the same date as the abduction urging Colombian lawmakers to play a greater role in the peace process. The ELN and the larger Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC) have waged over 40 years of war in their attempt to overthrow the government and establish a Marxist-style state. (AP, July 26; AP, NYT, July 28, 2004)

FARC is willing to reconsider peace talks: The FARC announced July 26 that it would be willing to negotiate with the Colombian government if it withdrew the Colombian military from Caqueta and Putumayo and released all FARC prisoners in exchange for the freedom of rebel-held hostages. Although one of the FARC leaders, Raul Reyes, said the proposed exchange of prisoners was viable, many believed it unlikely that President Alvaro Uribe would comply with the demands. President Uribe's administration recently issued statements claiming that the FARC was debilitated by the anti-rebel military assault, Plan Patriota, and would be forced to the negotiating table within two years. Reyes previously denied this statement and added that not only was the FARC still active but its leader, Manuel Marulanda, was still alive despite rumors of a cancer-related death earlier this year. The FARC have been at odds with President Uribe's administration and previously declared peace negotiations impossible. (Latinnews Daily, July 26, 2004)

BALKANS

BOSNIA

Symbolic bridge reopens: The Stari Most in Mostar reopened July 23 after being destroyed in 1993 by fighting between Bosnian Muslims and ethnic Croats. The bridge, built in 1566, survived both World Wars and symbolized multi-ethnic unity in Mostar. After the 1991 collapse of the former Yugoslavia, Bosnia's three ethnic groups engaged in a three-year civil war that killed 250,000 people and displaced 1.8 million. During the civil war, while Bosnian Serbs fought to remain with the Belgrade-based new Yugoslavia, ethnic Croats and Bosnian Muslims were engaged in secessionist movements for an independent Croatian state and an independent Bosnia. The Croats and Muslims of Mostar, although no longer involved in war, have lived in a divided society in which there were separate schools, television stations and athletic teams for the two communities but many hoped the bridge's reconstruction would help unify the city. (AP, BBC, July 23, 2004)

MACEDONIA

Protests erupt over ethnic Albanian rights: Approximately 20,000 ethnic Macedonians marched in the capital of Skopje in opposition to a draft law that was to be debated in parliament July 26. The law was to implement a decentralization plan by redrawing municipal boundaries, putting 16 of the country's municipalities under ethnic Albanian control and making the capital a bilingual city. Protestors feared the law would further divide the country along ethnic lines by giving too much power to a minority group. In 2001, the National Liberation Army, an ethnic Albanian rebel group, staged a seven-month uprising to demand greater rights for the Albanian minority, which made up one-fourth of Macedonia's population. The 2001 European Union (EU) brokered Ohrid Agreement contained the decentralization plan as a key point of the peace deal. Implementation of the plan was required for Macedonia's possible membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization and the EU. (AP, July 24; BBC, July 23, 26, 2004)

SERBIA

Court considers dividing Milosevic trial: Judges at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia at The Hague considered breaking up the charges against former President Slobodan Milosevic into separate, smaller indictments to speed up the trial. Milosevic was charged with 66 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide committed during the Balkan wars of the 1990s. Court officials said that separating the charges stemming from different incidents would render a verdict sooner, even though both the defense and prosecution were opposed to the separation. Milosevic has conducted his own defense since February 2002 but may be forced to accept a court-appointed lawyer because of health problems, which have repeatedly delayed the trial. (IHT, NYT, July 28, 2004)

GENDER AND PEACE

UN urges inclusion of women in Iraqi transitional process: At the conclusion of its three-week session at the UN, the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women issued a statement July 22 calling for Iraqi authorities to ensure gender equality and representation throughout the process of political transition and reconstruction. In particular, the Committee emphasized that the interim government's new laws should guarantee women's basic rights to be protected through gender-balanced family and inheritance laws. The Committee also recommended that the interim government provide women with an opportunity to participate in the upcoming elections not only as voters, but also as candidates. Since August 1986, Iraq has been a party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly in order to end discriminatory practices against women around the world. (UN News Center, July 22; UN Wire, July 23, 2004)

GREAT LAKES

BURUNDI

Political parties boycott talks: Six pro-Tutsi political parties walked out on negotiations with pro-Hutu political parties, saying that South African mediator Jacob Zuma was unwilling to listen to their requests concerning representation in the new government. According to the original plan for the power-sharing government, Hutus were to be

allotted 60 percent representation in the government and Tutsis were to receive 40 percent. The talks have been deadlocked since July 19 because the pro-Tutsi parties sought representation based on ethnicity and party affiliation, fearing that pro-Hutu parties could field Tutsi candidates. The Burundian civil war, which started in 1993, was caused by a build-up of tensions between the Hutu majority and Tutsi minority following independence from Belgium in 1962. The power-sharing transitional government was a result of a number of peace talks in Tanzania between 1998 and 2003. ([BBC](#), July 27; [IRIN](#), July 20, 22, 23, 2004)

RWANDA

Government replaces judges: In an attempt to strengthen the judiciary system, the government of Rwanda dismissed 503 judges and appointed 223 replacements between July 22 and 26. By the end of this year, 128 additional judges were to be appointed. According to Judge Richard Karugarama, who oversaw the changes, the dismissed judges lacked qualifications and experience necessary for their position and their replacements would make the judicial process quicker, more transparent, and less corrupt. The main courts, where the replacements occurred, were assisted by traditional community courts, called Gacaca, where many lower-priority cases were to be transferred. More than 70,000 suspected genocide perpetrators have been awaiting trial for actions committed during the 1994 genocide in which an estimated 937,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were killed. ([Hirondelle](#), July 22; [IRIN](#), July 23, 2004)

UGANDA

LRA attacks villages in Sudan: The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a rebel group aimed at displacing the Ugandan government, engaged in a series of attacks on rebels in southern Sudan July 23, killing approximately 40 people. Gunfire was exchanged between the LRA and two Sudanese rebel groups, the Equatorial Defense Forces (EDF) and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army/Movement (SPLA/M). An EDF spokesperson issued a statement accusing the Sudanese government of providing helicopter cover to the LRA during the fighting. The SPLA/M fought against the government of Sudan for more than 20 years in an attempt to gain independence. In order to fight the SPLA/M, the Sudanese government supported the LRA in attacks against the SPLA/M. Sudanese support officially ended in March 2002, when the governments of Sudan and Uganda signed an agreement allowing the Ugandan armed forces to search for the LRA in southern Sudan as part of Uganda's Operation Iron Fist. The LRA has waged war against the Ugandan government for 18 years, killing thousands. ([IRIN](#), [Monitor](#), July 26, 2004)

HORN OF AFRICA

SUDAN

Darfur rebels agree to new talks: The two main rebel groups in Darfur, the Sudan Liberation Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement, agreed July 23 to begin new talks with the Sudanese government. The first attempt at a dialogue between the government and rebels, mediated by the African Union (AU), ended July 18 when the rebel groups walked out. The rebel groups took up arms against the government in February 2003 to demand greater political representation for the region of Darfur. A government-supported Arab militia began to counter-attack the rebels causing the deaths

of up to 50,000 people and the displacement of 1.2 million. ([BBC](#), July 24; [IRIN](#), July 26, 2004)

INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

MEXICO

Government charges former president with genocide: A special prosecutor appointed by the Mexican government filed charges of genocide against former President Luis Echeverría and officials of his administration July 23 for their alleged role in the killing of student protesters 33 years ago. Although a judge promptly denied a warrant for Echeverría's arrest, the prosecutor stated his intention to appeal the decision. Echeverría, who served as president from 1970 to 1976, was accused of genocide for his role in a 1971 attack on in which 25 protestors were killed by government forces. The indictment against Echeverría was the first against a former Mexican president and was a product of President Fox's campaign to bring truth and justice to victims of past government abuses. Echeverría was a member of the Institutional Revolutionary Party which controlled the government of Mexico for 70 years until President Fox's election in July 2000. ([HRW](#), July 23; [NYT](#), July 24, 25, 26, 2004)

SUDAN

U.S. Congress labels Darfur crisis as genocide: The U.S. Congress unanimously passed a non-binding resolution July 22 that labeled the situation in Darfur as genocide. The resolution, which made reference to the obligations of the international community to prevent and punish the crime of genocide under the 1948 Genocide Convention, urged the Bush Administration to recognize the situation in Darfur as genocide and to consider both multilateral and unilateral intervention. The Bush Administration, as well as international organizations, did not conclude that the situation in Darfur constituted genocide. The government-supported Janjawid militias engaged in killing, raping, and destroying the villages of thousands of Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa peoples in the Darfur region of Sudan. A classification of the militia's actions as genocide would give rise to legal obligations for the international community to bring an end to the situation and punish those responsible for the genocide. ([BBC](#), [IRIN](#), July 23, 2004)

NEPAL

Government to hold peace talks: Deputy Prime Minister Bharat Mohan Adhikari said July 25 that talks with Maoist rebels would begin within two months. Though the government initiated the process for formal talks with Maoist rebels, both parties would need to reach certain agreements on their political agendas before talks could begin. The Maoists said they would not participate in talks unless the government agreed to form a constituent assembly to redraft the constitution, but the government responded that they would not compromise constitutional monarchy or multi-party democracy. The armed conflict began in 1996 when the Communist Party Nepal-Maoist demanded a people's republic and the end of the monarchy. ([Kantipur Online](#), July 23; [Kantipur Online](#), [Nepalnews.com](#), July 25, 2004)

Maoists disrupt education: Numerous public schools were threatened with closure this month due to Maoist demands for free national education. Many administrative costs

were met by student fees, though the government paid the salaries of teachers. The Maoists said students should not have to pay any fees. Approximately 2,600 primary schools and almost 1,500 lower and secondary schools were faced with closure because of Maoist threats and demands. Since the beginning of the armed conflict rural schools have struggled against closure caused by nationwide strikes, kidnappings of teachers and students by Maoists, and widespread fear and violence. ([Nepalnews.com](#), July 26, 2004)

USAID pledges funds for peace and development: The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announced July 26 that it would provide an additional \$24.4 million to five separate ongoing bilateral projects on health, women, hydropower, governance, and agriculture and forestry. Approximately \$7.1 million was to be provided to support conflict mitigation and peace building. USAID and the government of Nepal were to implement these programs in cooperation with a variety of NGOs, INGOs, private firms and individuals. The programs were to run through September 2007. ([U.S. Dept. of State](#), July 26; [Nepalnews.com](#), July 27; [USAID](#), July 8, 2004)

WEST AFRICA

COTE D'IVOIRE

Peace talks to resume: The political parties in Cote d'Ivoire agreed to participate in a new round of peace talks set to begin July 30. Co-hosted by UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and President John Kufuor of Ghana, the talks were to be aimed at ensuring implementation of the Linas-Marcoussis peace plan signed in 2003. African leaders including President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa and President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, who were involved in resolving the conflict, were expected to attend the meeting to encourage the parties to work together in the country's power-sharing government. Opposition ministers quit the country's interim government in March following the government's use of violence in quelling an opposition rally, which left 120 demonstrators dead. In June, President Laurent Gbagbo of Cote d'Ivoire held two rounds of talks with representatives of four major opposition parties in an attempt to revive the peace process. Those talks ended in failure due to the boycott by the New Forces, a major rebel group. ([IRIN](#), July 7; [UN News Center](#), July 21, 26; [Xinhua](#), July 22, 2004)

LIBERIA

Taylor's asylum trial begins: A Nigerian high court July 26 began a judicial review of former Liberian President Charles Taylor's asylum granted by Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo in August 2003. The court's review of his asylum was due in part to a joint suit filed June 15 by two Nigerian businessmen Emmanuel Egbuna and David Anyaele, who were abducted and tortured by Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in 1999 amid Sierra Leone's civil war. Egbuna and Anyaele accused Taylor of being responsible for their suffering by supporting the RUF with military training and weapons. The plaintiffs sought to compel the Nigerian government to hand Taylor over to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which accused Taylor of supporting the RUF during the 14-year civil war. President Obasanjo, who provided asylum to Taylor, has repeatedly rejected appeals that he extradite Taylor for trial in Sierra Leone and insisted that Taylor's asylum was an integral part of Liberia's peace process. Taylor, who fled to Nigeria in August 2003, faced a 17-count indictment for war crimes and crimes against

humanity committed during Sierra Leone's civil war, which claimed more than 50,000 lives and displaced an estimated one million people. ([IRIN](#), June 15, July 26, 2004)

SIERRA LEONE

Repatriation ends: The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) announced July 21 its completion of a three-year repatriation operation which began in January 2001. The program was initially scheduled to end June 20 but was extended to late July when thousands of refugees applied for assistance immediately before the deadline. UNHCR assisted with the repatriation of an estimated 178,000 Sierra Leonean refugees by providing the returnees with a transportation allowance, four months of food rations, and non-food items including blankets, soaps, and kitchen sets. UNHCR and other humanitarian organizations also provided vocational training and income generating projects to the returnees. During the 14-year civil war, which ended in January 2002, approximately 120,000 people fled to Liberia and 370,000 crossed into Guinea. According to UNHCR, an estimated 150,000 refugees did not repatriate, choosing instead to integrate into their host countries. ([IRIN](#), July 22, 2004)