



International Human Rights e-Brief

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Bulletin Board

BOOKS FOR AFRICA LAW BOOK PROGRAM

The Law & Democracy Initiative of Books For Africa has recently expanded their partnership with Thomson Reuters. Since January of 2009 Thomson Reuters has been donating new latest edition West law books which Books For Africa includes in its containers. The first shipment, with support from the ABA Section of International Law, went to the Arthur A. Grimes School of Law in Monrovia, Liberia. Since then West books have been shipped to 32 legal and human rights organizations in 11 African countries. Books have gone to law schools, bar associations, government human rights commissions, women lawyers associations, court systems, human rights NGOs and parliaments. Several shipments have been financially supported by ABA ROLI, SIL Africa and Human Rights Committees, and individual SIL members.

On November 29, 2010 Thomson Reuters and Books For Africa formalized their partnership at an MOU-signing event. Former US Vice President Walter Mondale, Advisory Board cochair of the program, was the keynote speaker. Audio greetings were also played from cochair Kofi Annan. In the agreement, Thomson Reuters pledges to provide up to one million dollars of new latest edition law and human rights books each year for the next three years, when Books For Africa has identified intended recipients and has obtained funding to ship the books. The law books are shipped as part of 40ft containers that also hold over 20,000 school and library books. The last shipment of 2010 left December 21 for Zimbabwe. It includes two West core law libraries, Nutshell modules and Human Rights modules for seven legal organizations, including Zimbabwe Lawyers for Human Rights. A fundraising effort led by the SIL Human Rights Committee helped to fund this shipment.

More information on this program is at: [.booksforafrica.org/law](http://booksforafrica.org/law). To see details of the Thomson Reuters partnership in this program go

to: [://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/legal/corporate_responsibility/global_social_justice/books_for_africa/](http://thomsonreuters.com/products_services/legal/corporate_responsibility/global_social_justice/books_for_africa/) The director of the Jack Mason Law & Democracy Initiative of Books For Africa is Lane Ayres. He may be contacted at [@gmail.com](mailto:)

11th ANNUAL JOURNAL OF INTERNATIONAL LAW SYMPOSIUM

The Michigan State University College of Law Journal of International Law is planning an annual symposium, **February 17-18, 2011**, with a panel on the effect of Human Rights rules on the Sovereignty of nations. If you have any suggestions for speakers on that topic, please contact Timothy Kaufmann at kaufma72@msu.edu or via telephone 1 (989) 996-1171.

HUMAN RIGHTS ESSAY AWARD

The 2011 Human Rights Essay Award competition's topic is: The Rights of Children and International Human Rights Law. This annual competition, sponsored by the Academy on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, encourages lawyers to produce scholarly work in International Human Rights Law. The Academy grants two awards—one for the best article in English and one for the best article in Spanish. Winners receive a scholarship to attend the Program of Advanced Studies on Human Rights and Humanitarian Law, travel expenses to Washington D.C., housing at the university dorms, a per diem for living expenses, and articles are eligible for publication in the American University International Law Review. The deadline for submissions is **February 1, 2011**.

A complete set of guidelines is available at: [://www.wcl.american.edu/hracademy/hraward.cfm](http://www.wcl.american.edu/hracademy/hraward.cfm)

Human Rights News

ACTIVISTS IN NEPAL MAKE INROADS AGAINST SERVITUDE OF GIRLS

Girls as young as 6 from the Tharu ethnic group have been handed over under a bondage system known as kamlari. The legacy of crushing poverty, caste and debt has left many victims scarred by abuse.

By Mark Magnier, Los Angeles Times
December 28, 2010

Reporting from Ghorahi, Nepal — The scrubbing, cooking and sweeping started as early as 3 a.m. When the landlord's children awoke hours later, the 9-year-old girl got them ready for a school she could only dream of attending.

Afternoons and evenings were spent cutting hay and tending animals. Around 10 p.m., she'd collapse for a few hours before starting again, seven days a week.

It must be my fate, she thought, a feeling eventually replaced by anger and bitterness.

Every January or February she'd see her family for a week, only to watch her father "sell" her back into another year of drudgery for a mere \$25. Although some of her friends spent most of their childhood this way, she was lucky: A civic group persuaded her parents to end the arrangement after three years.

For generations, ethnic Tharu girls as young as 6 have been handed over to landlords and brokers under a bondage system known as kamlari. The legacy of crushing poverty, caste and intergenerational debt has left many of the young victims scarred by sexual and emotional abuse.

"The landlord's son beat me many times," said Bishnu Kumari, 17, who was rescued a few years ago. "I felt dirty, unlucky to be born a girl. I was a slave."

These days, however, former kamlari victims are fighting back with notable success, the result of changing laws, activist pressure and nascent democracy in .

Read more: [://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-nepal-indentured-20101229,0,2662975.story](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-nepal-indentured-20101229,0,2662975.story)

INTERNATIONAL COURT RULES AGAINST MEXICO'S ARMY

It sides with two peasant ecologists who had long claimed they were illegally detained and tortured by Mexican soldiers working at the behest of powerful logging companies.

By Tracy Wilkinson, Los Angeles Times
December 22, 2010

Reporting from Mexico City —

has been hit by another international human rights judgment against its army.

In a long-awaited decision, the Inter-American Court of Human Rights ruled against Mexico and in favor of two peasant ecologists who had long claimed they were illegally detained and tortured by Mexican soldiers working at the behest of powerful logging companies.

It is the third such case to go against Mexico this year and was applauded by human rights organizations, which called for the government to submit military abuses to civilian justice.

Rodolfo Montiel and Teodoro Cabrera were activists working to protect the mountainside forests in southern Mexico's Guerrero state from often illegal logging by local land barons. They staged disruptive demonstrations and blocked roads. The army arrested them in 1999 in a raid that killed a third member of the peasant movement. The men said they were held incommunicado and beaten on their legs, torsos and testicles until they signed false confessions.

Although the Mexican human rights commission determined the men had been tortured, a military prosecutor rejected the claims. The men were convicted on what they say were trumped-up weapons and drug charges. They were released two years later amid international pressure but were never pardoned. (Montiel received political asylum from the U.S. and lives in California.)

In a 134-page ruling posted on its website Monday, the court said the Mexican government had violated Montiel and Cabrera's "rights to liberty and personal integrity" as well as their rights to due process and judicial protection. It ordered Mexico to properly investigate the torture allegations and pay Montiel and Cabrera damages. Moreover, it said the military judiciary that handled the case was not the proper venue.

Read more: [://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-mexico-ecologists-20101222,0,1300529.story](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/la-fg-mexico-ecologists-20101222,0,1300529.story)

ACCLAIMED IRANIAN FILMMAKER SENTENCED TO SIX YEARS IN PRISON

By Borzou Daragahi, Los Angeles Times
December 21, 2010

Reporting from Beirut — A celebrated Iranian filmmaker and opposition supporter has been sentenced to six years in prison and barred from making films or participating in political activity for two decades, his lawyer said Monday.

Jafar Panahi, 50, is the director of internationally renowned Iranian art films such as "The Circle" and "Crimson Gold," which delved into complex social problems. He was a supporter of the protest movement that sprang to life after the disputed 2009 reelection of [Mahmoud Ahmadinejad](#). He was arrested in March on charges of conspiring to make an unauthorized movie that chronicled the movement and released on bail 12 weeks later pending his sentencing.

His lawyer, Farideh Gheirat, told the semiofficial Iranian Students News Agency that the Revolutionary Court had handed Panahi the six-year sentence and barred him from writing screenplays or traveling abroad for 20 years. Gheirat said the sentence was disclosed Saturday.

Read more: [://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/middleeast/la-fg-iran-filmmaker-sentenced-20101221,0,7141936.story](http://www.latimes.com/news/nationworld/world/middleeast/la-fg-iran-filmmaker-sentenced-20101221,0,7141936.story)

KHODORKOVSKY FOUND GUILTY AS PROTESTS MOUNT AGAINST PUTIN AND 'CHARADE' TRIAL

Extended term expected for jailed former oil tycoon as supporters cite Kremlin influence in political trial [Parfitt](#) in Moscow [.co.uk](#), Monday 27 December 2010

The fate of oil tycoon [Khodorkovsky](#) was left hanging in the balance today after a court in Moscow found him guilty of theft and money laundering in a politically tinged trial that is seen as a weathervane for future course.

Viktor Danilkin, the trial judge, told the packed court that Khodorkovsky, 47, and his business partner, Platon Lebedev, 54, "carried out the embezzlement of property entrusted to the defendants". But the trial remains delicately poised because Danilkin will not sentence until he finishes reading his full 250-page verdict, which could take several days.

Opposing factions in the Kremlin are said to be in dispute over how much longer the businessman, who has already spend seven years in jail on earlier fraud charges, should stay behind bars.

Khodorkovsky, wearing a scuffed black jacket, and Lebedev, in a white tracksuit top, whispered to each other inside the enclosed dock and ignored the judge as he said the court had established their guilt. Hundreds of protesters outside the court in the Khamovniki district of southern Moscow shouted "freedom" and "Russia without Putin". Police arrested about 20 people, dragging them out of the crowd and crushing their placards.

Read more: [://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/27/khodorkovsky-guilty-protests-putin-trial](http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/27/khodorkovsky-guilty-protests-putin-trial)

SRI LANKA SAYS UN PANEL CANNOT CONDUCT OWN WAR CRIMES PROBE

COLOMBO, Dec 30 (Reuters) - Sri Lanka said on Thursday it would not allow a U.N. panel to conduct an independent probe into the country's 25-year war, a few weeks after reversing a ban on U.N. members taking part in a controversial, local investigating body.

The government said in a statement the U.N. panel can only testify before the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC), a state-created body that human rights groups say lacks the credibility, and impartiality, needed to look into alleged human rights violations by the military against Tamil Tiger rebels, especially in the last few months of the conflict.

"The U.N. panel will be given visas only to testify before the LLRC if they request (that) and not for any investigations," government spokesman Keheliya Rambukwella told reporters in Colombo.

"This is the government stance and there is no change in that. The U.N. has so far not requested visa in this regard."

The government statement came in response to demands by opposition parties to clarify a Dec. 19 statement that President Mahinda Rajapaksa would allow a three-member panel appointed by the U.N. Secretary General Ban Ki Moon into the country to take part in the LLRC. [ID:nSGE6BI00N]

Read more: [://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/sri-lanka-says-un-panel-can-not-conduct-own-war-crimes-probe/](http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/sri-lanka-says-un-panel-can-not-conduct-own-war-crimes-probe/)

SARAJEVO'S "WAR WITHOUT END"

Former BBC correspondent recounts life in city targeted by shelling and sniper fire.

By Rachel Irwin

A former BBC journalist told the trial of Radovan Karadzic this week that civilians in the besieged city of Sarajevo were deliberately targeted by snipers and subjected to "appalling" conditions.

"I would say that [civilians] were subjected to three and-a-half years of an appalling ordeal," said prosecution witness Martin Bell, who covered the wars in Croatia and Bosnia from 1991 to 1995.

"It was not just a question of being caught in the crossfire, there was deliberate targeting also, on both sides of the lines."

Karadzic was the president of Bosnia's self-declared Republika Srpska, RS, from 1992 to 1996. He allegedly planned and oversaw the 44-month siege of Sarajevo that left nearly 12,000 people dead, and his army is accused of deliberately sniping and shelling the city's civilian population in order to "spread terror" among them.

The indictment - which lists 11 counts in total - alleges that Karadzic was responsible for crimes of genocide, persecution, extermination, murder and forcible transfer which "contributed to achieving the objective of the permanent removal of Bosnian Muslims and Bosnian Croats from Bosnian Serb-claimed territory". In July 2008, he was arrested in Belgrade after 13 years on the run.

In one of Bell's television reports screened during the hearing, Sarajevo civilians run past what are said to be Bosnian Serb sniper positions in order to reach the only available water supply, located in a nearby basement. One man who was making the journey is shot in the leg as he turns a corner. He collapses and appears to go into shock.

"He was shot for a bucket of water," Bell narrates in the report.

Read more: [://iwpr.net/report-news/sarajevo%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9Cwar-without-end%E2%80%9D](http://iwpr.net/report-news/sarajevo%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%9Cwar-without-end%E2%80%9D)

SENTENCE OF FORMER YUGOSLAV ARMY OFFICER REDUCED FROM 17 TO TEN YEARS BY JUDGES

By Rachel Irwin

In an unprecedented review of their own judgement, appeals judges at the Hague tribunal this week reversed the murder conviction and slashed the prison term of ex-Yugoslav army, JNA, officer Veselin Sljivancanin.

It is the first time an appeals judgement has been reviewed - and subsequently changed - in the history of the tribunal.

Sljivancanin's lawyers had requested that the appeals judgement be reviewed after Miodrag Panic, the former chief-of-staff of Sljivancanin's unit, contacted them following the May 2009 appeals verdict.

In it, judges had overturned Sljivancanin's acquittal for aiding and abetting the murder of Croat and other non-Serb prisoners being held at an Ovcaro farm following the fall of the Croatian town of Vukovar to Serb forces in November 1991.

Sljivancanin's original prison sentence of five years - for aiding and abetting the torture of the prisoners - was more than tripled to 17 years on appeal. This week judges reduced it to ten years.

In their 2009 judgement, the appeals chamber found that Sljivancanin had been informed by his commander and co-accused, Mile Mrksic, that JNA protection for the prisoners at Ovcaro had been withdrawn and that Sljivancanin was consequently aware that there was a risk of local Serb forces killing the prisoners.

Mrksic, a former JNA colonel, was convicted of responsibility for the prisoners' murder, as well as their torture and cruel treatment.

According to the 2009 appeals judgement, the finding that Sljivancanin was responsible for aiding and abetting the prisoners' murder was based on the conclusion "that Mrksic must have told Sljivancanin that he had withdrawn the JNA protection from the prisoners of war held at Ovcaro".

However, at a pre-review hearing held in June 2010, Panic told the court that he was present during a conversation between Sljivancanin and Mrksic on the evening of November 20, 1991, which was after Mrksic would have issued the order for the JNA troops to withdraw from the farm.

Read more: [://iwpr.net/report-news/sljivancanin-appeals-conviction-reversed](http://iwpr.net/report-news/sljivancanin-appeals-conviction-reversed)

FORMER ARGENTINE DICTATOR GETS LIFE IN PRISON

By [MOFFETT](#)

BUENOS AIRES—Former Argentine dictator Jorge Rafael Videla, on trial for the first time since the country's Supreme Court rescinded his amnesty, was sentenced to life in prison by a federal court for the murder of 31 political prisoners in 1976.

Mr. Videla ruled Argentina from 1976 to 1981 and presided over the so-called Dirty War in which at least 10,000 people suspected of working against the regime, and perhaps as many as 30,000, were "disappeared" and killed, according to historians and human-rights groups.

After the country returned to democracy, Mr. Videla was sentenced in a landmark 1985 trial to life in prison for abuses committed during his rule. He served five years before he and other figures from the dictatorship were pardoned by President Carlos Menem, who said he was trying to close the book on a divisive era in Argentine history. The Supreme Court struck down the pardons in 2007, paving the way for new cases to be brought against officials from the dictatorship.

Wednesday's sentence was the culmination of a six-month trial in the city of Cordoba revolving around the case of 31 prisoners suspected of opposing the regime, who were rousted from their cells and executed following the coup that brought Mr. Videla to power. A three-judge panel issued the sentence, which it specified should be served in a common prison facility, as opposed to in a military jail or under house arrest. Mr. Videla, 85 years old, sometimes appeared to doze off during the trial. He was defiant when he did speak. "I don't speak of 'Dirty War,' I prefer to speak of 'just war,' " he said on Tuesday, asserting that his government had implemented a legitimate defense strategy against leftist guerrilla groups.

Read more:

://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704774604576035980945498152.html?mod=dist_smartbrief

SECURITY COUNCIL SETS UP NEW BODY TO FINISH WORK OF UN WAR CRIMES TRIBUNALS

The Security Council today set up a new body to finish the remaining tasks of the United Nations war crimes tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, while calling on the courts to conclude their work by the end of 2014.

By a vote of 14 in favour, with one abstention (Russia), the Council established the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals with two branches.

The Mechanism's branch for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) will begin functioning on 1 July 2012, while the branch for the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) will commence on 1 July 2013.

To ensure a smooth transition to the Mechanism, the Council requested both tribunals to take "all possible measures" to expeditiously complete all their remaining work no later than 31 December 2014.

Under the so-called "completion strategy," the tribunals were supposed to complete investigations by the end of 2004, all trial activities at first instance by the end of 2008, and all work in 2010.

Ambassador Vitaly Churkin said Russia abstained during the vote because it believed the tribunals had "every opportunity" to complete their work by the dates that had been previously agreed. "We firmly believe that today's resolution is the last on the issue of the duration of activity of the tribunals and that they will be fully wound up by the end of 2014," he added.

Several Council members welcomed the action, saying it sent a strong message against impunity and that it will help to preserve the legacy of the two tribunals.

By the resolution, the Council decided that all States "shall cooperate fully" with the Mechanism, and urged countries in which fugitives are suspected to be at large to further intensify their cooperation with the tribunals and the Mechanism.

It also urged the tribunals and the Mechanism to make every effort to refer cases not involving those most responsible for crimes to competent ICTY, which is based in The Hague, has indicted 161 persons for war crimes committed on the territory of the former Yugoslavia. The proceedings against 125 individuals have been completed, with only two indictees remaining at large – Ratko Mladic and Goran Hadžic.

Meanwhile, 10 fugitives wanted by the ICTR, which was created in 1994 in the wake of the Rwandan genocide and located in Arusha, Tanzania, still remain at large.

SOURCE: UN DAILY NEWS DIGEST - 22 December 2010

LIBERIA: UN DEMANDS GOVERNMENT TAKE ACTION TO FREEZE FORMER WARLORD'S ASSETS

For the fourth consecutive year, the Security Council today demanded that the Liberian Government “make all necessary efforts to fulfil its obligations” to freeze the assets of former president Charles Taylor, currently facing trial for war crimes before an international court.

At the same time, it welcomed the Government’s leadership at regional and international levels in the Kimberley Process that seeks to ban so-called “blood diamonds” – gems illegally mined or traded to finance conflicts, a major factor in unrest in Africa and a tool that Mr. Taylor is alleged to have used in the decade and a half when civil wars ravaged Liberia and neighbouring Sierra Leone.

In a unanimous resolution on sanctions that aim to shut off the sources of conflict, from illegal funding to illicit trade in natural resources to arms trafficking, the 15-member body noted “with serious concern the lack of progress” in implementing a 2004 resolution demanding that all the assets of Mr. Taylor, family members and associates be frozen to prevent them from obstructing the restoration of peace in Liberia and the region.

Mr. Taylor is on trial on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity before the United Nations-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) in The Hague, the Netherlands. He left his country amid violent conflict in 2003, and the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) has since then helped the West African country return to peace through democratic elections.

The Council extended for another year the mandate of a Panel of Experts set up in 2007 to monitor compliance with the sanctions imposed in connection with the civil war.

It urged the Government to redouble its efforts to ensure the effectiveness of the Kimberley Process under which diamonds have to be certified to have come from conflict-free sources, and said insufficient progress had been made on issues relating to arms trafficking.

Recalling an earlier decision not to renew sanctions on the export of timber, one of many natural resources that have been used to fund conflicts in Africa, it stressed that Liberia must continue to enforce forestry reform and revenue transparency laws.

It called on the Panel during the coming year to conduct two assessment missions to Liberia and neighbouring States to investigate any violations with regard to the illicit trade in arms, including individual perpetrators and sources of financing, such as natural resources, and to monitor progress in the freezing of assets, forestry reform and the Kimberley process.

As it has in past years, the Council warned that despite the significant progress made in Liberia since 2003, “the situation there continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region,” and stressed UNMIL’s continuing importance in improving security and helping the Government establish its authority throughout the country, particularly in the diamond, timber, and other natural resources-producing regions, and border areas.

SOURCE: 17 December 2010

IRISH ABORTION BAN VIOLATES WOMEN'S RIGHTS: EUROPEAN COURT

Ireland's constitutional ban on abortion violates the rights of pregnant women to receive proper medical care in life-threatening cases, the European Court of Human Rights ruled Thursday in a judgment that harshly criticized Ireland's long inaction on the issue.

The judgment from the Strasbourg, France-based court will put Ireland under pressure to draft a law extending limited abortion rights to women whose pregnancies represent a potentially fatal threat to their own health.

Ireland has resisted taking that step despite a 1992 judgment from the Irish Supreme Court declaring that abortions should be considered legal in Ireland in all cases where the woman's life would be endangered by continued pregnancy – including through threats to commit suicide. The delay has left the abortion rights of thousands of women in legal limbo, obliging many to travel overseas for the procedure.

The Strasbourg judges said Ireland was wrong to keep the legal situation unclear for women who received a doctor's advice that their pregnancy could complicate their own medical problems.

They ruled in favour of one of three litigants who sued Ireland for allegedly failing to protect their rights to health and well-being under terms of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Read more: [://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/europe/irish-abortion-ban-violates-womens-rights-eu-court/article1840105/](http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/europe/irish-abortion-ban-violates-womens-rights-eu-court/article1840105/)

ICC PROSECUTOR REQUESTS SUMMONS AGAINST SIX KENYANS ON POST-ELECTION VIOLENCE

The chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC) today requested that the tribunal issue summons against six Kenyan citizens for alleged crimes committed during the violence that erupted following the country's general elections in December 2007.

"The post election period of 2007-2008 was one of the most violent periods of the nation's history," the prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, said at a press conference at the ICC headquarters in The Hague today, adding that there are reasonable grounds to believe crimes against humanity were committed.

The prosecutor said that more than 1,100 people were killed, 3,500 injured and up to 600,000 forcibly displaced during 30 days of violence. There were hundreds of rapes, possibly more, and over 100,000 properties were destroyed in six of Kenya's eight provinces.

"These were not just crimes against innocent Kenyans," Mr. Moreno-Ocampo said. "They were crimes against humanity as a whole. By breaking the cycle of impunity for massive crimes, victims and their families can have justice. And Kenyans can pave the way to peaceful elections in 2012."

Those named by Mr. Moreno-Ocampo are: William Samoei Ruto, the Minister of Higher Education, Science and Technology; Henry Kiprono Kosgey, the Minister of Industrialization; Joshua Arap Sang, the Head of Operations for KASS FM radio station; Francis Kirimi Muthaura, the Head of the Public Service and Secretary to the Cabinet; Uhuru Muigai Kenyatta, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance; and Mohamed Hussein Ali, the Police Commissioner at the time of the violence.

The judges of the ICC's Pre-Trial Chamber II will now review the evidence. If they determine that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the six persons named committed the alleged crimes, they will decide on the most appropriate way to ensure their appearance in Court. The prosecution has requested "Summonses to Appear."

SOURCE: 15 December 2010

GERMANY ADMITS ENSLAVING AND ABUSING A GENERATION OF CHILDREN

Government agrees up to €120m in compensation for three decades of post-war 'Nazi-era' brutality in foster homes

By Tony Paterson in Berlin
Tuesday, 14 December 2010

Germany has owned up to one of the most disturbing examples of mass child and youth abuse in its post-war history, some 60 years after the first teenagers started being locked away and mistreated by supposedly "caring" foster homes.

The country agreed yesterday to provide a €120m (£101m) compensation fund for the estimated 30,000 victims who were among the 800,000 children in German foster homes in the Fifties, Sixties and Seventies. Institutions that for decades meted out inhuman treatment – including ritual beatings, periods of solitary confinement, forced labour and sexual assaults – were not youth remand centres or borstals as might be expected, but homes run by nuns and priests in former West Germany's Catholic and Protestant churches, as well as state-run homes.

Antje Vollmer, a Green Party politician and former German parliamentary president, announced the establishment of the fund yesterday after two years of round-table discussions with victims, politicians and church leaders in an attempt to provide some form of retrospective justice for those who were abused.

Read more: [://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/germany-admits-enslaving-and-abusing-a-generation-of-children-2159589.html](http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/germany-admits-enslaving-and-abusing-a-generation-of-children-2159589.html)

PARTIES TO COLUMBIA CONFLICT RAPED ALMOST 15,000 WOMEN IN 2001-09

14 Dec 2010

Source: alertnet // Anastasia Moloney

BOGOTA (AlertNet) – Colombia's armed groups and, to a far lesser extent, its army raped 14,779 women between 2001 and 2009 - or five women a day on average - and forced hundreds more into prostitution, a has found.

Based on existing data and its own interviews with 2,700 victims of sexual abuse, the report by Intermon Oxfam, a member of international aid group Oxfam, estimates that rebels were responsible for rapes of 12,809 girls and women and the armed forces committed the rest of those crimes during the nine-year period.

"Sexual violence constitutes a common and frequent practice in the context of the armed conflict," Intermon Oxfam said in a statement after the launch of the report earlier this month.

For more than four decades Colombia has been mired in fighting between government troops, leftist rebels, cocaine smugglers and far-right paramilitary militias. The accompanying lawlessness is a key driver of sexual crimes. Armed groups also rape to punish and intimidate enemies and to instill fear among communities. In addition, the groups forced more than 1,500 women and girls into prostitution between 2001 and 2009, while members of the armed forces coerced almost 1,000 women into sex work.

Sexual violence against women in Colombia is being carried out equally by non-armed men, including their partners and family members, Intermon Oxfam said. In total nearly 500,000 women suffered rape, forced prostitution, sexual harassment and forced abortion and sterilisation between 2001 and 2009.

Read more: [://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/parties-to-colombia-conflict-raped-almost-15000-women-in-2001-09-study/](http://www.trust.org/alertnet/news/parties-to-colombia-conflict-raped-almost-15000-women-in-2001-09-study/)

LEBANON: NATION BRACES FOR HEZBOLLAH REACTION TO INDICTMENTS

December 21, 2010

Lebanon is bristling with nervous tension as it awaits the announcement that could spark a new round of civil strife or even [war with Israel](#), but disaster may not be as imminent as many fear.

It has been nearly two weeks since a prosecutor's office told reporters in the Hague, Netherlands, that the draft indictment in the investigation into the 2005 assassination of former Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri would be handed over to the pretrial judge, Daniel Franson, "[very soon](#)." Hezbollah members are expected to be accused of complicity in that bombing, which killed 21 others as well.

The nation has braced for a confrontation between the government and the Shiite militia, which has dismissed the court as a politically charged sham and vowed to fight the charges and prevent any of its members from being taken into custody.

But experts estimate it will take another six to 10 weeks for the judge to review the merits of the case, and even if he confirms the indictment, he can rule to keep its contents confidential. That means the names of suspects -- unless somebody inside the court leaks the names to the media -- probably won't come out before mid-February, if they are made public at all.

Read more: [://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2010/12/tribunal-lebanon-hezbollah-iran-israel.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+BabylonBeyond+%28Babylon+%26+Beyond+Blog%29](http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2010/12/tribunal-lebanon-hezbollah-iran-israel.html?utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+BabylonBeyond+%28Babylon+%26+Beyond+Blog%29)

THE SIEV-221 DRAMA: LESSONS FROM A DISASTER

Between 30 and 50 people died; we rescued 42 passengers, but will we learn some lessons?

Project SafeCom website

2 January 2011

In the end, 42 people were rescued by locals and the Navy; thirty bodies were recovered. Prime Minister Julia Gillard interrupted her holidays, but her statements fell well short of the mark, while the nation did not stop in reverence and respect for the grieving: racism, refugee vilification, xenophobia and asylum seeker hatred ran rampant in the blogosphere; Daily Telegraph columnist Andrew Bolt's opportunism reached its zenith when he accused Labor's Gillard of "having blood on her hands" for allowing boats to land.

Following the SIEV-221 disaster we saw many calls for a re-think, especially in the political debate, but many expressed doubts about whether the brazen and opportunistic baiting of Labor with continuous "stop the boats" howls by conservative-radical politician Tony Abbott and his immigration spokesman Scott Morrison would change at all.

If anywhere Australian politics is broken and bankrupt, it is around maritime asylum seekers arriving on its shores. It seems clear that the Gillard Labor government, still captured in a fatal stranglehold of its perpetual neurosis since the 2001 'Tampa election', is unwilling or unable at all to gain the upper hand of the debate - split as it is between its supporters of hardline 'stop the boats' policy adherents and its more moderate voices urging decency to boat arrivals, supporting fulsome adherence to Australia's obligations.

See <http://www.safecom.org.au/siev221-lessons.htm>

CONCERNS RAISED ABOUT DARWIN IMMIGRATION DETENTION FACILITIES

Tuesday, 14 December 2010

The Australian Human Rights Commission has raised concerns about the high numbers of families with children and unaccompanied minors being held for longer periods of time in immigration detention facilities in Darwin.

In a statement on the Commission's visit to immigration detention facilities in Darwin, Commission President Catherine Branson QC said she was concerned about the impacts prolonged detention were having on the health, education and psychological needs of children.

She also called on the Australian Government to stop using the Asti Motel as an immigration detention facility as soon as possible.

"There were more than 170 people detained in the Asti Motel when we visited in September, including more than 80 young children and unaccompanied minors," she said.

"It is a very cramped environment. The outdoor areas are all paved or concrete and there are no open grassy areas for children to play.

"The Commission acknowledges the significant efforts of detention staff who are working in challenging circumstances," Ms Branson said.

"The Commission welcomed the Minister's October announcement that some families with children and unaccompanied minors will be moved into Community Detention.

"However, the conditions of detention for some children in Darwin underline the need to implement this initiative as quickly as possible."

Ms Branson said the Commission continued to have serious concerns about Australia's mandatory immigration detention system, in particular, the increasing length of time people were spending in immigration detention and the impacts of prolonged and indefinite detention on people's mental health. "The Commission met with a number of people in detention, including children, who had experienced significant trauma in their home country or who had attempted self-harm while in detention," Ms Branson said. "The Commission continues to call on the Australian Government to reconsider the mandatory detention system. "People should only be held in immigration detention if there is a risk that justifies detaining them," she said. "If no such risk exists, they should be allowed to reside in community-based alternatives to detention while their refugee claims are assessed."

The Commission's statement can be found at

[.humanrights.gov.au/human_rights/immigration/idc2010_darwin.html](http://humanrights.gov.au/human_rights/immigration/idc2010_darwin.html)

Job, Fellowship, and Volunteer Postings

ABA-SIL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE JOB BOARD

The ABA-SIL Human Rights Committee is pleased to announce a comprehensive new Job Board consisting of web pages for potential employment opportunities from dozens of international human rights NGOs. The job board was developed by ABA member **Ellen J. Tabachnick**. It can be accessed from the Committee Resource module in the lower right column of our committee's home page at [://www.abanet.org/dch/committee.cfm?com=IC950000](http://www.abanet.org/dch/committee.cfm?com=IC950000).

STAFF ATTORNEY - IMPACT LITIGATION - Los Angeles, CA POSTED: 12/6/10

Public Counsel is the largest pro bono public interest law firm in the country. Founded in 1970, it is dedicated to advancing equal justice under law by delivering free legal and social services to the most vulnerable members of our community. Public Counsel's eight programmatic areas are Appellate Law, Children's Rights, Community Development, Consumer Law, Early Care and Education, Homelessness Prevention, Immigrants' Rights, and Veteran's Benefits. Public Counsel has a full-time staff of 92, including 49 staff attorneys in four offices.

The Impact Litigation Staff Attorney is a new position at Public Counsel, to join Public Counsel's one-year-old Impact Litigation Project. The Staff Attorney will be responsible for working with the Director of Impact Litigation, Project staff, and staff in Public Counsel's other projects to develop new impact litigation opportunities arising out of Public Counsel's programmatic areas as well as to staff existing cases. Membership in the California State Bar (or must pass the next California Bar Examination).

To Apply: Please send résumé to: Catherine E. Lhamon Director of Impact Litigation Public Counsel 610 South Ardmore Avenue Los Angeles, CA 90005 Or via email to @publiccounsel.org or fax to: (213) 385-9089 Position open until filled.

VOLUNTEER LAWYERS NEEDED IN TANZANIA

Asylum Access Tanzania (AATZ) solicits applications from well-prepared candidates with impeccable writing, persuasive advocacy skills and a passion for social justice who are ready to commit themselves to spending six months or more in Tanzania. Volunteer Legal Advocates (VLAs) will provide legal counsel, advice and advocacy on behalf of refugees seeking asylum, resettlement or the assertion of other legal rights. VLAs play an integral part of AATZ's team and will get the opportunity to work with UNHCR and Tanzanian Government representatives to coordinate and strengthen the involvement of AATZ in decisions affecting refugee rights.

Position Responsibilities

VLAs are responsible for the following duties:

- Advise refugees and assist them in understand their rights;
- Interview refugees and advocate for them regarding their individual RSD and/or resettlement;
- Maintain a high caseload of RSD cases in a fast paced, demanding environment while adhering to strict filing deadlines;
- Conduct client intake and screening interviews, assess needs, and refer to other service providers as needed;
- Where possible, develop unique and innovative legal tactics to assist clients with other legal needs, including assistance to assert rights to movement, security, humanitarian aid, education and social services;
- Conduct research on "country of origin" situations and refugee law jurisprudence;
- Develop material for "Know Your Rights" workshops for refugees both in camps and urban settings, as well as teach and/or participate in the workshops;
- Occasionally, represent AATZ at events, conferences and meetings, and/or assist in other publicity and/or fundraising efforts;
- Assist with the general administrative duties of the office, including helping to build administrative capacity within the office to meet demand as AATZ grows.

Preferred Qualifications:

- A positive, flexible personality and attitude;
- English is required. Intermediate to proficient French or Swahili are very helpful.
- A Bachelor of Laws, JD or equivalent is preferred, but other degrees or equivalent experience in a related field will be considered. Exceptional law students will be considered;
- Experience working in direct clients services, ideally with asylum seekers or in human rights, as well as a strong passion for social justice work;
- Experience working with vulnerable populations and/or survivors of trauma;
- International experience living and working cross-culturally in developing countries, preferably in Africa;
- Experience working in a non-profit setting with limited resources, ideally in the global south;
- An easygoing personality with the demonstrated capacity to handle living and working in an ad-hoc environment where difficult situations and crises can develop at a moment's notice;
- Aptitude to successfully complete assigned tasks with minimal oversight while serving clients with the highest ethical standards;
- Understanding of the importance of working as part of a team and the ability to carefully and faithfully follow the direction of AATZ management staff;
- Ability to commit to at least 6 months of full-time work.
- Fluency in French an asset; Fluency in Swahili a major asset.

How to Apply

Because of space limitations, AATZ VLA positions are awarded on a very competitive basis. Each year Asylum Access receives hundreds of applications coming from all over the globe for a handful of VLA positions. It is best, therefore, for applicants to submit polished, complete applications as early as possible. We accept applications on a rolling basis.

To apply, please send a cover letter, resume, and a legal writing sample to

[@asylumaccess.org](mailto:info@asylumaccess.org). Please be sure to specify in your cover letter what makes you uniquely qualified to be a VLA with AATZ, how volunteering with us fits into your career plans, and the dates that you expect to be available.

Application Deadline: **January 7th, 2011**

Position length: at least 6 months

Start date: March 7th, 2011

2011 CROWLEY FELLOW IN INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

The Crowley Program in International Human Rights is dedicated to promoting human rights scholarship and advocacy at Fordham Law School and around the world. The Program's core elements include an annual two-week fact-finding project in another country, human rights lectures, a summer internship program, and student research projects involving various human rights issues. The students involved in the project participate in course work, independent research, planning and conducting the project, and related follow-up work. The Program has successfully conducted projects in Turkey (1998), Hong Kong (1999), Mexico (2000), Ghana (2001), Malaysia (2002), Bolivia (2003), Kenya (2004), Romania (2005), South Africa (2006), Malawi (2007), New Zealand (2008), Nepal (2009), and Tanzania (2010).

The Crowley Program is administered by a fellow who is a law school graduate. The Fellow, as a member of the adjunct faculty, will teach a seminar in human rights in preparation for the annual fact-finding project during the spring semester. The fellowship includes running a year-round lecture series, advising students seeking international human rights internships and post-graduation employment, and coordination with the human rights community.

The fellowship is a 16-month position, totaling a commitment of three semesters. The fellowship begins in mid-August 2011. The Fellow's annual salary is calculated at \$55,000 for the first year and \$60,000 for the final semester, and includes benefits. Applicants should send a statement of interest (including detailed description of your international human rights experience, teaching/mentoring/advising experience, language skills, and how the fellowship will advance your professional goals), a résumé/CV, a law school transcript, and at least two letters of recommendation by the last day to apply: **January 31, 2011** in one complete application package to:

"2011 Fellowship"

Crowley Program in International Human Rights
Fordham University School of Law
33 West 60th Street, 2nd Floor, Room 222B
New York, NY 10023

Only finalists will be contacted. No calls, please.

For details, please see website: [://www.leitnercenter.org](http://www.leitnercenter.org)

DIRECTOR

ESCR-NET

ESCR-Net seeks a Director to provide strategic guidance, management and leadership to expand the Network's capacity and substantive work; to guide the process to relocate the Network's Secretariat to a global South country; and to lead the Network in its new period of growth.

ESCR-Net is the largest global Network of organizations and activists from around the world working together to secure economic and social justice through human rights. ESCR-Net seeks to strengthen the field of all human rights, with a special focus on economic, social and cultural rights (ESCR), and further develop the tools for achieving their realization. Through ESCR-Net, groups and individuals share information and strategies, develop new tools and resources, support joint advocacy actions, and develop a collective voice. ESCR-Net has a core membership of more than 220 organizations and individual activists from over 65 countries.

Location of the Position

The position is currently based in New York City and includes international travel. The new Director will initially work from New York City, and move with the Secretariat when it is relocated in order to ensure a smooth transition and continue to lead the work of the Network. In exceptional circumstances, the possibility will be opened up for the new Director to work from another location initially as long as sufficient time is spent in New York City to become immersed in the operations of the Network.

All interested applicants, regardless of nationality or current location, are encouraged to apply. ESCR-Net will assist the new Director in obtaining the necessary work authorization.

To Apply

Please send a curriculum vitae, a letter of interest, and the contact information of 3 references by **January 24, 2011** to ESCR-Net by email @escr-net.org using Director Search as the subject of your email. Please note that all application materials must be submitted in English. Due to the high volume of responses we have received in the past, only short-listed candidates will be contacted. Thank you for your understanding during this process.

For more information on ESCR-Net, please visit our website at .escr-net.org

INTERNATIONAL JOBS

Several Positions

European Union Rule of Law Mission in Kosovo

Location: Kosovo

Last Date: January 7, 2011

[://devnetjobs.tripod.com/7december2010-eu-rule-of-law.html](http://devnetjobs.tripod.com/7december2010-eu-rule-of-law.html)

Human Rights Officer

International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)

Location: New York

Last Date: January 30, 2011

[://216.197.119.113/jobman/publish/article_72482.shtml](http://216.197.119.113/jobman/publish/article_72482.shtml)

Senior Associate - Human Rights Defenders Program

Human Rights First

Location: Washington DC

Last Date: January 20, 2011

[://216.197.119.113/jobman/publish/article_72473.shtml](http://216.197.119.113/jobman/publish/article_72473.shtml)

SOURCE: See more jobs at: [://www.DevNetJobs.org](http://www.DevNetJobs.org) or by sending a blank email to: -subscribe@yahoogroups.com

Educational Courses & Conferences

REMINDER Invitation: January 2011 - AAAS Science and Human Rights Coalition Meeting

It is our pleasure to invite you to the upcoming meeting of the Science and Human Rights Coalition that will be held on **January 11, 2011** at AAAS headquarters in Washington, DC.

A network of scientific membership organizations that recognize a role for science and scientists in the realization of human rights, the Coalition aims to build bridges and coordinate, educate and build capacity within the scientific community, and between the scientific and the human rights communities.

The upcoming meeting is the fifth of the Coalition since its launch in January 2009. The meeting will begin on the morning of January 11 with a panel discussion on "Science, Human Rights and Haiti's Recovery." The opening plenary will explore the function of human rights in identifying post-earthquake needs in Haiti and the corresponding role for scientific tools and knowledge in implementing post-earthquake reconstruction.

Following the opening plenary, the Coalition meeting will continue with information sessions, working meetings, and workshops on human rights issues central to the mission of the Coalition. Sessions will include "Human Rights and Human Subjects: Protection Mechanisms", "She Speaks Science, He Speaks Human Rights: Bridging the Divide", "Getting the Word Out: Designing a Human Rights Track for Your Annual Meeting" and "Working with UN Human Rights Mechanisms: Lessons for the Joint Initiative." The meeting will conclude with a plenary speaker and reception.

To attend the upcoming Coalition meeting, please online. While registration is required, there is no fee for participation. Please RSVP by December 22nd.

We hope you will join us for the upcoming meeting of the Coalition and encourage you to contact us with any questions about how you may become involved in this important endeavor.

Reminder

The materials and information included in this listserv are provided as a service to you and do not necessarily reflect endorsement by the American Bar Association or the Section of International Law. We encourage subscribers to pass the information along to colleagues and other interested parties and to contribute press releases, news items, event listings, job vacancies and other appropriate information. To post a message email @mail.abanet.org. For questions, suggestions or problems, contact Russell Kerr, @kerrlawfirm.com.

Thank you again for your interest and participation!

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