

# Thousands flee fighting in Congo

By Andrew Meldrum

**KINSHASA (CONGO), DEC. 21.** More than 100,000 Congolese have fled renewed fighting between the Democratic Republic of Congo army and rebels in the battle-torn east of the country, United Nations officials said yesterday.

The civilians trekked deep into the mountainous jungle to escape weekend fighting around the deserted farming town of Kanyabayonga. Rebel forces gained ground, pushing Government troops back 40 km and taking control of two more villages.

"Conservatively, more than 100,000 people have run from their homes because of the fighting in the past few days," said Patrick Lavand'Homme of the U.N.'s office for the coordination of humanitarian assistance.

## Peace plan hit

"With these new people, it means we have 800,000 displaced people in North Kivu province. Most are from fighting earlier this year and even last year."

He said humanitarian groups were finding it difficult to assist all the refugees. "The soldiers are looting people's homes. There is no security."



Two girls sit with their mother in a hospital in Nyamilimo, eastern Congo, close to the flashpoint town of Kanyabayonga, after one of the girls was shot at. — AFP

The confusion surrounding the new fighting had also threatened the U.N.'s efforts to move ahead with its peace plan for the area.

Eastern Congo, rich in gold, diamonds and minerals and home to a

myriad of armed factions, has been the scene of considerable fighting over the past four years. Its border with Rwanda is at the root of many of the troubles. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2004

22 DEC 2004

THE HINDU

# Toll in Congo conflict put at 3.8 million

**DAKAR (SENEGAL), DEC. 10.** Six years of continuing conflict in Congo have claimed 3.8 million lives, half of them children, with most victims killed by disease and famine in the still largely cut-off east, the International Rescue Committee said in a study released on Thursday.

For years, the international association has been producing the most widely used running estimate of deaths in Congo, Africa's third largest nation.

## Deaths continue

More than 31,000 civilians continue to die monthly as a result of the conflict despite peace deals, the group says, citing mortality surveys prepared with the assistance of on-site teams of physicians and epidemiologists.

Congo's death roll remains one-third higher than the rest of sub-Saharan Africa 18 months after major peace deals, the New York-based group said.

Most deaths come from easily treatable ailments, it said, citing measles epidemics known to have swept populations in rebel-held areas during the war.

The 1998-2002 war in Congo drew in the armies of five other African nations.

Neighbouring Rwanda and Uganda and allied Congolese rebel groups held control of the east and northeast. Government forces held the west.



**People return to their village of Rusamambo, near Goma in the Democratic Republic of Congo recently, days after they fled to the bushes fearing Rwandan military action. — AP**

Fighters in rebel-and foreign-controlled areas blocked normal trade routes, plundered food stores, and blocked farmers from producing crops, aid groups and refugees have said.

A U.S. National Academy of Sciences committee approved the original methodology, which largely is the standard process used for estimating suf-

fering from crises in areas that have been all or largely cut off. For the survey, researchers used scientifically randomised selection to pick 10 health zones in west Congo and 11 in east Congo, and further scientific random selection to pick households within the zones for interviewing.

The group's last survey, re-

leased in April 2003, estimated 3.3 million deaths.

While the methods of the survey have been widely accepted, some statisticians have cautioned against overprecision in estimating death rolls when on-the-ground documentation of deaths is not possible, as is the case with many wars. — AP

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THE HINDU

U.N. peacekeeping forces and Congolese troops. — AP

# Rwanda, Congo flare-up looms

By Rory Carroll

**KINSHASA, DEC. 4.** The MI-17 helicopter rocks and shudders into life, the rotors accelerating until flight UN863 is airborne and skimming the rooftops of Goma for another mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

The helicopter is Russian-made, the crew is Indian and the passengers comprise South African infantrymen, a Uruguayan officer, a Filipino technician and an American diplomat: classic U.N. peacekeeping.

The trouble is, the land below barely has a peace to keep. Thousands of Rwandan troops massed on the border this week and threatened to invade, prompting frenzied diplomatic efforts to avert a new war.

Amid the valleys and volcanic hills ringing Lake Kivu, and the corrugated tin cities and thatched villages bordering Rwanda, war is brewing. The helicopter banks right over the town of Bweremana, host to hundreds of families who fled fighting in the mountains.

It swoops over the town of

Mimova, where drunk Mayi-Mayi militias control roadblocks and where the U.N. abandoned a base this year because of security fears. Then the forests below, a blanket of green, from where reports and rumours seep of burnt settlements, atrocities and invasion.

Two years after peace accords supposedly paved the way for an end to Congo's agony, it was not supposed to be like this.

Foreign armies that backed opposing sides in the five-year civil war withdrew, rival Congolese factions formed an interim government in the capital Kinshasa, and the U.N. deployed its biggest, most expensive peacekeeping force.

## Impoverished land

In an impoverished land the size of western Europe, with a shattered infrastructure and numerous armed groups, nobody said forging peace would be easy. But it was hoped that a holocaust that had consumed more than 3 million lives — the worst single-conflict death toll since 1945 — was ending.

This week it threatened to reignite. At a closed-door briefing on Thursday, the head of U.N. peacekeeping, Jean-Marie Guehenno, reportedly told the Security Council that eight Rwandan battalions, massed on Congo's border, might invade and tip the Great Lakes region back into the abyss.

Aerial photographs and ground sightings suggested that Rwandan troops had already crossed the border. The U.N. aid workers recorded claims of fierce fighting and looting from thousands of people fleeing through the forests.

"Atrocities are also taking place. We expect more displaced people in the coming days," said Bernard Lesflaive, of the U.N.'s office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs in Goma, a provincial capital bordering Rwanda.

Despite the accords, fighting never stopped. Instead of integrating into a new, unified army, militias and rebel groups continued sporadic clashes. But they tended to be local affairs, so-called micro-conflicts. The

danger now is of an escalation back to full-scale regional war.

The crisis started last week when Rwanda's Tutsi-led government threatened to send in troops to search Congo's forests for Rwandan Hutu rebels, including those responsible for the 1994 genocide that killed 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

The Rwandan President, Paul Kagame, told the U.N. and the African Union that a brief military action was planned. While Mr. Kagame's adviser, Richard Sezibera, on Thursday denied that troops had crossed the frontier, diplomats in the Rwandan capital Kigali said they believed that troops were in Congo — possibly small units of special forces.

Kigali says a 10,000-strong Hutu force based in Congo is harassing Rwanda, using infiltrators and rocket attacks — an intolerable threat to security that neither the U.N. nor Kinshasa is tackling.

Kigali invaded in 1998 to hunt the Hutus, sparking a war that sucked in seven other countries

and spread hunger and disease across eastern Congo. It withdrew in 2002 under international pressure.

One regional analyst said: "Rwanda has genuine security issues, but this is also about keeping eastern Congo in its sphere of influence." The Hutu rebels posed a limited threat, numbering only 4,000, of whom a minority were implicated in the genocide. It is odd that Kigali should move now, since U.N. blue helmets and Congolese troops have intensified efforts to demobilise the Hutus, albeit with results the U.N. privately admits are disappointing.

## Bad faith

Yesterday, in his first statement since the crisis began, the Congolese President, Joseph Kabila, accused his small but militarily more powerful neighbour of bad faith. "We are at the point of completely neutralising the armed groups that have always served as their pretext for attacking our country," he said.

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8 NOV 2004

# Ivory Coast burns as mobs attack French

Associated Press  
Abidjan (Ivory Coast),  
November 7

**MACHETE-WAVING** mobs thousands-strong looted and burned in Ivory Coast's largest city on Sunday, laying siege to a French military base and searching for families after a day of ground and air clashes between the forces of France and its former colony.

Ivory Coast — its tiny air force destroyed and its airports taken by the French in retaliation to a deadly air strike on a French peacekeeping position — reluctantly said on Sunday it was willing to cease fire and that it was pulling back troops. The move aims to restore a ceasefire with rebels controlling the north that was

in place for more than a year until government forces broke it on Thursday.

Still, the government took a defiant tone towards France. Ivory Coast will ask the Security Council for action against France, presidential spokesman Desire Tagro declared on state TV, adding, "We're faced with aggression by one country against another. We're going to inform the entire world... that France has come to attack us."

France's punishing military strikes came in retaliation to the Ivory Coast air force's surprise bombing of a French peacekeeping position on Saturday in the north, held by rebels since civil war broke out in the world's top cocoa producer in September 2002.

France has about 4,000 peacekeepers in Ivory Coast

and the UN 6,000 — trying to hold together a country vital to the stability of the region. Saturday's air strike killed nine French troops and an American consultant working for an aid group.

About 250 French troop reinforcements landed on Sunday at Abidjan's international airport, which was taken by France late on Saturday after it destroyed what it said was the entire Ivory Coast air force — five helicopter gunships and the two Russian-made Sukhoi warplanes used in the air strike on the French. The reinforcements flew from the West African nation of Gabon, where France was holding three newly scrambled Mirage fighter jets on standby.

The French retaliation sparked a wave of rioting by pro-government mobs in the

capital, Yamoussoukro, and the country's biggest city, Abidjan. A Red Cross official, Kim Gordon-Bates, said about 150 people were wounded in the Abidjan violence, most from bullets. The official refused to give any information on deaths.

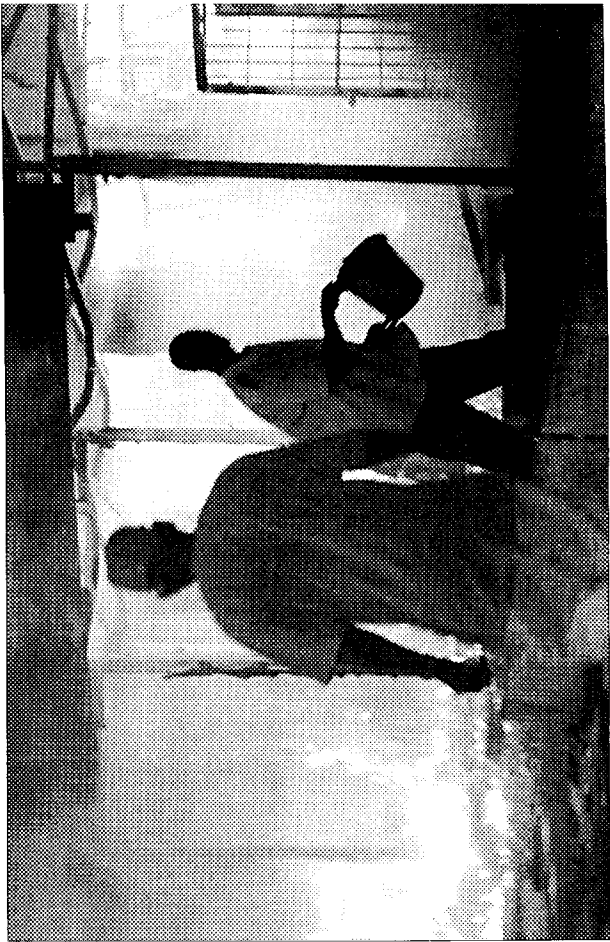
Gunfire rang out in Abidjan and smoke billowed into the air from mobs laying waste to both foreign and locally owned property. France battled to hold back the mobs, dropping percussion grenades on mobs massing at bridges, the international airport and the military base in Abidjan, French military spokesman Henry Aussavy said.

Loyalist thugs set up roadblocks of burning tyres across the city. A crowd armed with machetes and iron bars entered a neigh-

bourhood near the city's main French military base, demanding to know if there were any French persons living in the district. "We're all terrified, and try to reassure each other", one French resident said by telephone from his home elsewhere in the city, speaking on condition his name be withheld. "We've been told by the embassy to stay at home... It's a difficult situation to live through", he said.

More French reinforcements headed toward Abidjan on Sunday afternoon from Yamoussoukro and 20 heavy vehicles bearing French troops headed for Abidjan.

Rioting persisted despite demands from France and the UN Security Council, meeting in an emergency session, that President Laurent Gbagbo restore order.



Men douse the flames at the Librairie de France, set ablaze during riots in Abidjan, on Saturday. AF

# French deny targeting Ivorian President

9/17  
9/14  
Abidjan (Ivory Coast): French armoured vehicles took up positions near the home of President Laurent Gbagbo on Monday after a weekend of violent clashes, and supporters feared an attempt to overthrow him, the presidential spokesman said. The French strongly denied targeting Gbagbo's residence, saying their forces were only securing a temporary base at a hotel about 200 metres away.

"The French army has deployed 50 tanks ... a few metres from the residence of the head of the state," presidential spokesman Desire Tagro said.

French forces were firing warning shots to hold back crowds of thousands trying to block the road around Gbagbo's home, said a worker at Hotel Ivoire, when reached by telephone. "Ivory Coast is a sovereign state," slogans on signs held by the demonstrators said.

The hotel worker, who refused to be identified, gave the same number as Tagro for the number of armoured vehicles.

"Their presence here is scaring people, they're crying and they think that President Gbagbo is going to be overthrown," Tagro said.

The crowds were responding to an appeal on national radio on Monday, calling on Ivorians to converge upon Gbagbo's home and the national television outlet. Hard-liners have called throughout the weekend for loyalists to form a "human

shield" around Gbagbo's home as French forces deploy in Ivory Coast's largest city, quelling mob violence that erupted after France destroyed the fledgling air force of its former colony on Saturday.

The destruction came in retaliation for an Ivory Coast airstrike that killed nine French peacekeepers and one American aid worker.

In Paris, French defence minister Michele Alliot-Marie rejected accounts by some Ivory Coast officials that Saturday's bombing was a mistake, saying there was "no rea-



A looter passes by a French soldier as he guards the De Gaulle bridge in Abidjan

son" for Ivory Coast warplanes to have "missed their targets."

The defence minister called a reopening of peace talks for Ivory Coast "indispensable."

African Union (AU) leaders called an emergency session for late Monday on Ivory Coast, the world's top cocoa producer and for decades the most prosperous and peaceful nation in West Africa—and the pride of France's former colonial empire. A 1999 coup ended Ivory Coast's reputation for stability, and a 2000 uprising by Gbagbo's supporters installed him as President. AP

THE TIMES OF INDIA

9 NOV 2004

THE TIMES OF INDIA

# 'Darfur on the path to normality'

By Abdalmahmood  
Abdalahleem Mohammad

The editorial 'Sudan on the brink' (*The Hindu*, Sept. 11) misreads the current realities and the fact that the situation in Darfur is returning to normality. The article started by emphasising that "in not initiating steps to improve the situation in Darfur, the regime of Omar Al-Bashir in Sudan is bringing on itself tough international measures."

The report submitted to the Security Council by Jan Pronk, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, refutes this.

He outlined positive steps taken by the Government of the Sudan towards normalising the situation. These included the deployment of additional police force, the lifting of all access restrictions for humanitarian relief, the stopping of any offensive action against the rebel groups, the disarming of the popular Defence Force, engaging in negotiations with the rebels without pre-conditions, and the stepping up of home-grown initiatives to strengthen the social fabric.

Regarding the disarming of militias, on which the report in-

dicated lack of progress, Sudan has already pointed out to the Security Council that if the United States has so far failed to disarm the militias in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is not being realistic to expect Sudan to do the same in a region that is larger than France.

Rather than backing sanctions, which the editorial itself said had become a U.S. foreign policy tool, it is incumbent on all concerned to augment the capability of the Government to deal with the security and humanitarian situation.

## RESPONSE

The issue of Darfur has been blown out of proportion to serve electoral objectives of winning over the black voters in the race to the White House along with switching of cameras from the quagmire of Iraq and also from Palestine, whose people have long been begging for an international protection force to no avail.

The recent statement of the U.S. Secretary of State before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee alleging "genocide" in Darfur is to serve this electoral goal, despite his denial of the same some weeks back. This change of attitude is also meant

to destroy the content of Mr. Pronk's report to the Security Council, which outlined the genuine efforts of the Government of the Sudan in dealing with the situation.

If talks in Abuja are prolonged, it is not the Government that is to blame. The brilliant editorial, 'Hope for Darfur' (*The Hindu*, Aug. 11) said it all when it explained the reason behind that by pointing out the intransigence of the rebel groups, who are banking on international military intervention and whom the Security Council urged "to respect the ceasefire, end the violence immediately, engage in peace talks without pre-conditions and act in a positive and constructive manner to resolve the conflict."

The Sudan Government, whom certain powers would like to punish on politically motivated accounts, is capable of solving its own problem with the assistance of its African brothers and the genuine well wishers of the international community.

When the lives of human beings are at stake, responsibility demands that no mixed signals should be sent to rebel groups.

(The writer is Sudan's Ambassador to India.)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2004

Africa  
AD-10  
4/9

## SUDAN ON THE BRINK

IN NOT INITIATING steps to improve the situation in Darfur, the regime of Omar al-Bashir in Sudan is bringing on itself tough international measures. A United Nations Security Council resolution adopted on July 30 gave Khartoum a month to take steps to disarm the Janjaweed Arab militias in order to prevent them from wreaking violence on the non-Arab population of Darfur, improve security in the region and address the humanitarian crisis — or else face unspecified “measures”. Sudan agreed to comply with the resolution but has evidently failed to deliver on its commitment. To the contrary, there are reports of a fresh outbreak of violence in the region. Described by the U.N. as the world’s “worst” humanitarian crisis, the violence in Darfur has thus far taken an estimated toll of 50,000 lives and left over a million homeless and at least two million more without adequate access to food or water. The world cannot stand by and watch the crisis worsen, as it did in the case of the genocide in Rwanda a decade ago. The first of the U.N. reports on Sudanese compliance with the resolution has faulted the Government for doing nothing to rein in the marauders, raising the prospect of firmer action by the international community. The United States has circulated a draft resolution that proposes the imposition of penalties on Sudan’s oil industry, the expansion of the African Union force monitoring violence in the Darfur region, and the creation of an international commission to determine whether genocide occurred. Strongly worded resolutions of a similar nature were contemplated earlier but shelved because of opposition from President Al-Bashir. If punitive measures are now to be thrust on him, he will have no one to blame except himself.

In fact, Mr. Al-Bashir must consider himself relatively fortunate since western governments

had urged the imposition of sanctions but the U.N. was understandably reluctant to use this weapon. Sanctions lost much of their legitimacy after becoming an instrument of U.S. foreign policy in the 1990s. The humanitarian crisis that the coercive U.N. sanctions triggered in Iraq raised serious questions about the efficacy and morality of sanctions, and suspicion — in most cases justified — that they were used mainly to punish weak nations that refused to fall in line with the U.S. Evidence of just how allergic the international community is to the word came with the July resolution in which “sanctions” was replaced with the more general “measures under Article 41 of the U.N. Charter.” But sanctions have on occasion worked powerfully. They worked to end apartheid in South Africa, even though it took nearly two decades for the results to show. If Sudan does not put its house in order soon, it will leave the international community with no option other than using this weapon, unpleasant though this may be. There is no question of looking away while millions of homeless, hungry and frightened people wait for help.

It is also disheartening that there is little progress in the peace talks between the Sudan Government and the two militant groups operating in Darfur, the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Army. It was to crush this rebellion that Khartoum first unleashed the Janjaweed. A ceasefire between the Government and the two groups has not worked. Negotiations between the two sides, arranged by the African Union, have gone on for the last three weeks without any breakthrough in sight. The African Union must intensify its efforts to find peace quickly in western Sudan, as this will certainly help avert an escalation of the humanitarian disaster in Darfur without a resort to sanctions.

THE HINDU

1 1 SEP 2004

Africa  
11.10.14

## Sudan rejects genocide charge

**KHARTOUM, SEPT. 10.** Sudan said today it "categorically rejects" U.S. accusations that it carried out genocide in the western region of Darfur, scene of what the United Nations calls the world's worst humanitarian catastrophe.

"To consider what is happening in Darfur as genocide does not represent the international consensus and sends a negative

signal to the other side who are negotiating with the Government," Khartoum's Ambassador in Washington was quoted as saying in a letter published by the press here.

The Ambassador, Khedr Haroun, said he had got in immediate contact with the U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, to inform him of Khartoum's position. — AFP

**Sridhar Krishnaswami** reports from Washington:

Mr. Powell has told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the administration has come to the conclusion that 'genocide' has taken place in Sudan with the Government-backed Arab militia, the *Janjaweed*, committing abuses against the black African population in the Darfur region.

"We concluded that genocide has been committed in Darfur and that the Government of Sudan and the *Janjaweed* bear responsibility — and genocide may still be occurring," Mr. Powell remarked.

He said that the conclusion was based on interviews conducted by U.S. officials with refugees from the Darfur region and other evidence.



# Sudan rejects UN ultimatum

Agence France Presse

*Africa*  
ABUJA, Aug. 26. — Sudan will ignore a UN Security Council deadline to end militia attacks in Darfur by the end of the month and instead resolve the crisis through African Union peace talks, Khartoum's chief negotiator said today.

Asked if Sudan would

seek to meet the terms of the UN ultimatum, which expires on 30 August, agriculture minister Mr Majzoub al-Khalifa said: "Not at all. It's never crossed our minds or our hearts. We are working towards our duties to our people. We are a dignified people. It's not our aim to set dates. What is going to happen is that the deadline will pass and we are going to contin-

ue negotiations."

The minister added: "I think this thing (the Abuja peace talks) will finish in three or four or five days."

Last month the UN gave Sudan until the end of August to disarm the Janjaweed Arab militia, which has been accused of attacking and massacring civilians during Darfur's 18-month-old civil war, or face sanctions.

THE STATESMAN

27 AUG 2008

# Darfur: enough imperial crusades

By Peter Hallward

WHAT IS exceptional about the violence of the Government-backed janjaweed militia in Darfur, is less its scale than the intensity — if belated — international attention it has received.

To oppose direct Western intervention in Sudan is not to downplay Khartoum's crimes during this latest twist in the catastrophic war that has cost perhaps two million lives since 1983. Over the last 20 years, in order to shore up their exclusive and authoritarian rule, Sudan's succession of military rulers have done everything possible to sustain an often imaginary distinction between "Arabs" and "Africans," pitting Muslims against Christians and herders against farmers.

Before we jump to the conclusion that benevolent invasion, however, is the natural consequence of our new found humanitarian duties, we should remember that this will not be the first time that either Britain or the United States has intervened in Sudan. An earlier moral crusade, the "war against slavery," provided much of the ostensible justification for British colonisation of the region at the end of the 19th century.

Britain's disastrous southern policy, inaugurated in 1929, made permanent the long-standing division between a relatively prosperous (mainly Muslim) northern territory and a much poorer (mainly animist or Christian) southern territory. The war that began between these two territories even before the British abandoned the colony in 1956 entered its most violent phase shortly

after the Americans began backing, in the late 1970s, the flagging regime of Sudan's increasingly reactionary General Gaafar Nimeiri.

The resulting chaos created the conditions for the Taliban-style reaction whose effects continue to shape the situation even today. In Sudan,

in the south allowed George W. Bush to trumpet a rare foreign policy success, one that finally offered U.S. investors the prospect of access to Sudan's oil.

The crisis in Darfur clearly meets several of the criteria that must apply before the British Prime Minister,

## *The alternative to armed intervention in Darfur is not passive resignation, but support for an African Union-led solution.*

the backlash against U.S. meddling came in the form of Hassan al-Turabi's National Islamic Front, and in 1989 a new regime took over, an unstable combination of Mr. Turabi's NIF and another military clique led by General Omar al-Bashir. Gen. Bashir and Mr. Turabi turned Sudan against its Cold War ally, strengthened the divisive enforcement of Islamic law and devoted new resources to the assault on the underdeveloped south.

Despite this history, until the public relations war in Iraq started going so badly a couple of months ago it seemed that Sudan might have done enough to ward off further U.S. hostility. Since 1997, the country has adhered to a strict IMF restructuring plan that has seen foreign investment and oil exports (along with arms imports) soar. Since 9/11, Gen. Bashir has provided the U.S. with a steady stream of much-vaunted intelligence. Apparent progress over the last couple of years towards a power-sharing peace accord between Gen. Bashir and John Garang

glo-U.S. forces now have only one moral responsibility: to stay at home.

The alternative is certainly not passive resignation. We should fund the immediate and forceful deployment of African peacekeepers and build on the example recently set by Paul Kagame's Rwanda. We should help the African Union become an effective and independent political actor, capable of brokering equitable political solutions to the long-standing conflicts that Western intervention, almost always, has only helped provoke. We should press our governments to reverse the policies that contribute to poverty and violence in Sudan and its neighbours.

Had we been serious about the claims of Darfur's farmers for a more equitable distribution of wealth, we should have explored ways of contributing to their non-violent pursuit, or else supported the Sudan Liberation Army when it launched its initially successful rebellion in February 2003 — not simply waited to provide charity to its survivors in the refugee camps of 2004.

And if we are still serious about the SLA's claims now, then we should debate their merits and decide whether, and how, to help those struggling to achieve them. This is a political question before it is a moral or humanitarian one. Today's humanitarian crisis is precisely a result of past political failure. — © *Guardian Newspapers Limited 2004*

*(Peter Hallward teaches at King's College London and is the author of Absolutely Postcolonial, Publisher: Manchester University Press, 2002, ISBN: 0719061261.)*

# Crisis in Darfur

5/15/08  
The images shown around the world of this region of Sudan reveal apparently vast empty landscapes, the remains of burnt-out villages, the ghostly outline of huts reduced to abandoned shapes. Bare trees, aridity, the impermanent refugee camps, with their frightened exiles, polythene, rags and tents flapping in the wind, women trying to protect their children against the lashing rains – to outsiders, it seems inconceivable that anyone could ever survive in such a barren environment, let alone call it home. Whether or not Darfur is home to uncounted quantities of oil, Sudan certainly is; and this, in the crisis of oil production in the world following the debacle in Iraq, is enough to transform its significance.

With 50,000 people killed and well over a million refugees, up to one-fifth of them sheltering in makeshift camps in neighbouring Chad, there is no doubt that this is the most urgent humanitarian crisis in the world. It may be wondered why it took so long for the big global players to exhibit their tenderness for the people of Darfur, when communal hostilities broke out in West Darfur in 1998, worsened in 1999, and turned into the ethnic cleansing (the US Congress called it “genocide”) early in 2003 of the Fur, Masalit and Zaghawa peoples.

The media have given little hint of the long and often tormented history of the people; conflicts which didn't start yesterday, and to which the threats, promises and entreaties of the West are not only powerless to rectify, but to which they have, over time, contributed during their fateful African adventures. Instability is built into the very existence of Sudan, the most extensive country in Africa, with its arbitrary boundaries, which in the modern world have crystallised into an unwieldy, possibly untenable, nation-state, without regard for ethnicity, religion, custom and culture.

Since Anglo-Egyptian control over Sudan was established in 1898, it has been split between an Arab/Islamic north and an animist/partly Christian south. Civil war between these two entities has raged for almost the whole period of Sudan's independence in 1956, during which time more than two million civilians have died. This is the largest death toll in any conflict since World War II. John Garang, of the Sudan People's Liberation Army, has been fighting the Khartoum-based regime for autonomy. An Islamic-inspired military coup, led by Omar Hassan al Bashir in 1989, tightened control by the north, and intensified the assault on the south. Islamic religious law was established. If the European Union, United Nations and USA were slow to react to the forcible depopulation in Darfur, this is, in part, because they did not want to jeopardise a cease-fire that had been negotiated in 2002 between the main warring parties.

Darfur remained virtually untouched by this conflict. The region is named after the Fur, the dominant African ethnic group, although the ethnic mix is more complex than the conflict between Arab militias and African farmers would suggest. Broadly, however, the Arab peoples were predominantly nomadic livestock herders,



The village of Tundubai in Sudan's Darfur region burnt down by marauding Janjaweed Arab militias. – AFP

while the Fur lived by subsistence agriculture, producing cereals and fruit.

The kingdom of Fur fell to an Islamic dynasty around the 14th century. It was deeply involved in the slave trade, whereby the Fur traded Africans from other parts of Sudan as slaves to the Arab north. When Napoleon campaigned in Egypt, the then monarch of Darfur provided him with 2000 black slaves, and established the capital as Al Fashir, the most significant city in Darfur.

In 1821, Sudan was conquered by Egypt. In 1881, a religious leader, the Mahdi, proclaimed himself prophet, “the Expected One”, and campaigned to unify the tribes of western and central Sudan. The state created by the Mahdi lasted only until 1898, when Khartoum was overwhelmed by Anglo-Egyptian forces led by Lord Kitchener. The Anglo-Egyptian government installed a new sultan, who led a revolt against the British Empire in 1916, declaring allegiance to the Ottoman Empire. This was crushed, and Darfur was incorporated into British-ruled Sudan. It remained so after independence in 1956.

Darfur is one of the poorest and most remote parts of Sudan. Although the population is a mere 6 million or so, the economic interests of herders and agriculturists co-existed, in spite of occasional raids by herders on rich agricultural lands. Between the 50s and the 70s, there were low-intensity conflicts over grazing, cattle-raiding and access to water points, but more persistent fighting occurred from the early 80s, when prolonged drought drove nomadic Zaghawa and Arab groups southwards into the central Fur region, where they destroyed growing crops, rather than allowing their animals to graze on the post-harvest stubble, as had been customary practice.

Two rebel groups – the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudanese Liberation Army – accused the government of oppressing black Africans by favouring Arabs, and severe fighting broke out in

2003. This was crushed by the bombing of Darfuran settlements by the government of Khartoum, in alliance with Arab militias, called the Janjaweed, who burned villages, indiscriminately slaughtered the people and drove more than a million black Muslim people from their homes. It has been said that the Sudanese Liberation Army had been in close contact with the SPLA of John Garang, while the SPLA is alleged to have been in receipt of US aid.

The proximate cause of the humanitarian crisis is thus the consequence of a long and tangled history. Its significance remained hidden by the apparently more urgent need of settling the more spectacular civil war, which was taking place on what many regarded as yet another frontier between Islam and Christianity.

Although the sustained attacks upon the non-Arab black farmers of Darfur began in February 2003, the governments of the USA and Europe began to show concern only 16 months later. In July 2004, US secretary Colin Powell visited Khartoum and warned the government to rein in the Janjaweed militias, or the

“international community” would consider other actions. The government promised immediately to disarm the militias “and other outlawed armed groups” and to protect the displaced people. An African military force of 300 would be allowed into Darfur, to monitor a cease-fire agreed in April between the rebel groups and the Khartoum authorities. The British announced their readiness to send troops, as did the Australians (another, perhaps premature “coalition of the willing”), while on 22 July the US Congress unanimously called on President Bush to consider “multilateral or even unilateral intervention to prevent genocide should the UN Security Council fail to act.”

A UN Security Council resolution was passed on 29 July, which required Khartoum to comply with the UN resolution within one month. If the government of Sudan failed to do so, further actions

would be considered. These would include economic sanctions, but not military action.

Sudan, anxious now to be re-admitted into the international fold, has since 1997 been under US sanctions, which have prevented the USA from significant participation in its oil industry. This has been dominated by Chinese, Malaysian, Indian and Canadian companies. The Bush administration pressured both Khartoum and the SPLA to sign the formal peace agreement; and in May 2004, it was agreed that revenue from the southern oil-fields would be shared between Sudan people's Liberation Movement and Khartoum. If the Western countries were slow to react to the events in Darfur, which had been well documented since early 2003, this was no doubt because it did not at that time threaten Western access to the potentially significant oil reserves of the south.

The government in Khartoum has displayed some willingness to comply – it would perhaps like to follow Libya out of the cold into the warm embrace

of the international community; but it knows the considerable power it holds in any promise to offer the West yet another source of the holy oil on which its economies depends. While the humanitarian agencies expressed urgency on the needs of the displaced, sick and dying in the refugee camps, the Arab League pleaded as recently as 8 August for “more time” for the Sudanese government to end the crisis. It supported the African Union plan to dispatch up to 2000 troops to Darfur from Nigeria, Rwanda and Tanzania, to protect refugees and disarm and neutralise the Janjaweed. The foreign minister Osman Mustafa Ismail said his government “has exerted all its efforts to contain the crisis peacefully.” He also accused the rebels in Darfur of seeking to turn it into an independent state.

It is usually possible to judge the estimate of the West of its interests in any conflict, by the speed and intensity of the rhetoric it employs to denounce any violations of human rights which occur in the process. The tardy condemnation by the EU, the UN and US and the distinction they have tried to maintain between the government of Khartoum and the Janjaweed militias, suggest that they are seeking an accommodation with Khartoum, which will enable them to hail yet another triumph in their war on terror, as Sudan follows the path of repentance shown by Libya, and in consequence gives access to the multinational oil companies to its as yet unquantified resources in this largest of all African countries. If the authorities in Khartoum offer access to their oil to Western countries, resolution of the humanitarian crisis in Darfur is unlikely to be distinguished by an excess of zeal on the part of those beneficiary nations.

(The author lives in Britain. He has written plays for the stage, TV and radio, made TV documentaries, published more than 30 books and contributed to leading journals around the world.)

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new vistas  
JEREMY SEABROOK

Africa Sudan

## HOPE FOR DARFUR

11-10 1/8

THE DECISION BY Sudan, after initial reservations, to comply with a United Nations Security Council resolution to disarm the *janjaweed*, Arab militias that have forced a mass displacement of non-Arab civilians in Darfur, is a positive development. Disarming these militias, widely believed to have the backing of the Government in Khartoum, is the immediate first step in resolving what the U.N. recently described as the world's "worst" humanitarian crisis arising out of the conflict: thousands dead, over a million homeless, and two million more without adequate access to food or water. Without doubt, reining in the marauders is the only way to persuade the displaced to return to their villages free from the fear of being attacked once again. In demanding that the Sudan Government must begin disarming the militias by August 31 or face unspecified "measures" under Article 41 of the U.N. Charter, the resolution quite clearly hinted at economic and diplomatic sanctions without saying so explicitly. Pakistan and China abstained from the vote but all other countries backed the resolution. International opinion is justly concerned over the situation in Darfur. The Sudan Government, under General Omar al-Bashir, took the diplomatically correct path of avoiding an unnecessary confrontation with the international community by agreeing with the U.N. on a plan to disarm the *janjaweed*, improve security in Darfur, and take steps urgently to address the humanitarian crisis at hand.

However, the problem in Sudan's troubled western province is more complex than it seems and requires a more nuanced response than just setting deadlines or holding out a threat of sanctions by the international community. The Sudanese Government evidently used the *janjaweed* as a proxy to crush a rebellion by two armed militant groups, the Justice and Equality Movement and the Sudan Liberation Army in Darfur. As the Egyptian Foreign Minister pointed

out after an Arab League emergency meeting over the weekend, the time frame envisaged by the U.N. resolution may not provide enough leeway for Sudan to show results on the ground, particularly as many of the *janjaweed* now operate independently of the Government. A hasty imposition of sanctions, which will affect all of Sudan, can only worsen the conflict. Moreover, while it is essential to stop the *janjaweed*, the conflict in Darfur will not end unless efforts are made to address the underlying rebellion. International efforts must focus as much on bringing round the two rebel groups — whose intransigence has fed on hopes of international military intervention — as putting pressure on the Government. Sensibly, the U.N. resolution acknowledges this by urging the "rebel groups to respect the ceasefire, end the violence immediately, engage in peace talks without preconditions, and act in a positive and constructive manner to resolve the conflict."

A promising aspect of the multilateral approach is the pro-active role being played by the African Union in defusing the crisis. The African Union, which is normally reluctant to comment on the internal affairs of its members, was among the first to protest against the atrocities in Darfur. Nigeria and Rwanda sent their soldiers to the region as part of a peacekeeping force to protect the monitors of a ceasefire that was signed between the Government and the rebel groups in April. They are now considering scaling up the number, from 300 to 3,000. The Nigerian President, Olusegun Obasanjo, has invited the Sudan Government and the rebels to resume peace talks in his country later this month. Sudan's African neighbours understand the gravity of the problem and the complexities of the issues involved better than any other country. They must play the primary role in crafting an enduring solution to the humanitarian and political crisis in Darfur.

# 'Apartheid Party' to merge with Mandela's ANC

Press Trust of India  
Durban, August 8

SOUTH AFRICA'S New National Party, which legalised apartheid in the country, has said it will merge with the African National Congress with its leader joining the ruling party today.

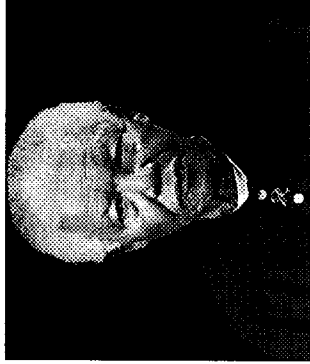
NNP leader Marthinus Van Schalkwyk today announced that he had joined the ANC, driving the last nail in the coffin of the "Apartheid party". NNP succeeded the National Party which imposed apartheid after it came into power in 1948, introducing discriminatory laws against South Africa's black majority.

Schalkwyk, who is the Minister of Environmental Affairs and

Tourism in the Thabo Mbeki Government, said it was now up to other members of his party to join the ANC. NNP spokesman said yesterday that under an agreement with ANC, the party would cease to exist after September next year and its leaders will join ANC.

"I will personally encourage other NNP leaders and members to join the ANC," he said.

ANC leader and former President of South Africa Nelson Mandela, who led the anti-apartheid struggle, was sent to jail by the National Party founder and his party was kept away from politics till 1994 when NP, which was renamed as New National Party, was dislodged by the ANC in the country's first truly democratic elections.



**Nelson Mandela**  
*Unitely union*

"We will obviously have to do some convincing so that those people can also join the ANC. But I must emphasise that no one be forced to join," Schalkwyk said

Welcoming the move, President Thabo Mbeki said it was a remarkable show of reconciliation.

The chairman of the ruling ANC, Defence Minister Mosisoa Lekota, said the party had always welcomed people with a shared vision of non-racialism. "We have decided to take our co-operation to another level now that the NNP has decided to adopt our non-racial principles of the ANC's Freedom Charter," Lekota said.

Van Schalkwyk's decision follows the party's dismal showing in the general elections in April when the party lost the Western Cape to the ANC and had only seven members elected to the National Parliament. Van Schalkwyk's decision has drawn varied reac-

tions with most saying that he had taken the action to save his position and those of his party leaders.

Retired veteran politician, Helen Suzman, who fought the National Party's apartheid policies, said she was not surprised. "The NNP leaders are after a few more perks. They are going wherever they think they will get rewards and positions. They've got no principles whatsoever," she said.

Political analyst Tom Lodge said it's now the end of Afrikaner nationalism in South Africa. "I am now sure they are taking over a great asset, but in a symbolic sense this is the end of Afrikaner nationalism in its historical form, so people in the ANC see it as a victory," he said.

# U.S., Britain gather evidence on Darfur atrocities

By Ewen Macaskill

**LONDON, JULY 28.** The U.S. and British Governments are gathering evidence to determine whether genocide is being committed in the Darfur region of Sudan, where an estimated 30,000 people have been killed and more than a million have fled their homes.

The U.K. Foreign Office said yesterday it would not shy away from uncomfortable conclusions, even though a declaration of genocide would invoke a legal obligation to intervene.

The move comes as the U.N. Security Council prepares to vote on a resolution warning Sudan to protect civilians or face sanctions in 30 days. In the meantime the measure would put a weapons embargo on armed groups in Darfur.

It also comes amid heightened diplomatic tension between the Sudanese Government and the U.S. and Britain. Sudan's Foreign Ministry called in a British representative in Khartoum on Monday to protest against a statement by General Sir Michael Jackson, the chief of general staff, that

the U.K. would be able to send 5,000 troops if necessary.

## Sudan warning

The Sudanese Cabinet yesterday expressed its "absolute denunciation of the deployment of (foreign) troops in Darfur and affirmed that Sudan is capable of solving its conflicts by itself".

The country's Foreign Minister, Mustafa Osman Ismail, on a visit to Turkey, said: "If we are being attacked, definitely we are not going to sit silent, we will retaliate."

In Britain a Foreign Office spokesman, asked yesterday whether what was happening in Darfur amounted to genocide, said: "There are certainly some elements. There is an ethnic element to the violence but we do not at the moment have incontrovertible proof."

The Foreign Office is collating information from various sources in Darfur, while U.S. officials have been interviewing Sudanese refugees who have crossed the border into Chad to determine whether genocide was taking place. Both the U.S. and British Governments are keen to keep diplomatic pres-

sure on the Sudanese Government in the hope that international action will not be needed. But both also fear being accused of failing to act, as they were over Rwanda and Srebrenica.

Genocide is defined in a 1948 U.N. convention as acts "committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group." These acts include: killing members of the group; causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group; or deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part.

The U.S. House of Representatives voted by 422 to 0 last week in favour of a resolution declaring genocide in Darfur. The Senate unanimously agreed in a voice vote. The crisis began last year when the Sudanese Government armed militia groups, known as the Janjaweed, to help suppress a rebellion. The militia groups have destroyed hundreds of villages, setting in motion the refugee exodus.— ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2004

# Sudan warns of second Iraq war

Agencies  
Khartoum, July 23

SUDAN ON Thursday warned Britain that it risked becoming bogged down in an Iraq-style quagmire if it sent troops to Darfur, where more than a million refugees face the threat of famine, disease and attacks by pro-government militia. Foreign minister Mustafa Osman Ismail said British soldiers would be seen as an occupying force and face a backlash from the people of Darfur.

More than a million refugees — mainly from Darfur's black African tribes — have fled their homes after being attacked by the predominantly Arab Janjaweed militia, armed and sponsored by Sudan. They now live in tent cities where a shortage of rations and overcrowding is leading to deaths from hunger and disease.

Speaking at a Press conference in Paris, Ismail expressed irritation with Britain and the US, which have been pressing Sudan to disarm the Janjaweed and protect the refugee camps.

"I don't understand why



REUTERS  
US Secretary of State Colin Powell and UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan at the UN headquarters in New York on Thursday.

Britain and the US are systematically increasing pressure against us and not operating through the United Nations", he said.

But US secretary of state Colin Powell and UN secretary general Kofi Annan have dismissed the accusations. The

two spoke hours after the US circulated a revised draft resolution that would threaten sanctions against Sudan if it did not arrest Janjaweed militias in 30 days.

Meanwhile, the US Congress has declared that the killings of tens of thousands of

black civilians by Arab militias in Sudan's Darfur region amount to "genocide", while US Secretary of State Colin Powell warned that Khartoum must act quickly to disarm Arab militias or face UN sanctions.

The House of Representatives and Senate unanimously passed resolutions on Thursday night urging US President George W. Bush, likewise, to call the situation in Sudan "by its rightful name — genocide".

A 1948 UN convention obligates the international community to prevent and punish acts it has declared as genocide. Sudanese diplomats at the UN could not immediately be reached for comment on Friday.

The US Congress measures also called for the Bush administration work to with the international community to stop the atrocities in the region the size of France, where pro-government militias called Janjaweed have killed up to 30,000 people, most of them black Africans, and driven over 1 million from their homes in the 15-month conflict.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

The Times

11-19-14  
2/7

# Darfur atrocities must end, Powell tells Sudan

By Jeevan Vasagar

**KHARTOUM (SUDAN), JULY 1.** The U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, said yesterday that the militias which have terrorised western Sudan "must be broken", and described conditions in the region as a "humanitarian catastrophe".

After visiting a refugee camp in northern Darfur, he said that controlling the Janjaweed militias was the only way of restoring peace.

"The Sudanese military must provide security for the camps and in the countryside so that people can return [home]."

Last night, Reuters news agency reported that it had obtained a draft copy of a U.S.-proposed U.N. resolution calling for an arms embargo and travel ban on the Janjaweed. It does not propose action against the Sudan Government, which is accused of supporting the militias, but diplomats said there was an implied threat of extended sanctions if there was no improvement.

It says the Security Council will decide within 30 days of the resolution being adopted whether the sanctions should be applied "to any other individuals or groups responsible for the commission of atrocities in Darfur".

Standing beside the Sudanese Foreign Minister, Mustafa Osman Ismail, Mr. Powell said that the international community would re-

main "engaged" in Darfur. Mr. Ismail said police and military units would be sent to Darfur to "combat the Janjaweed", but the Government has previously spoken of incorporating the Janjaweed into its security forces.

Last week, aid workers at the Mornay refugee camp in western Darfur pointed out Janjaweed troopers on camels, wearing military fatigues and carrying long whips, patrolling in the heart of the camp. Witnesses have told human rights organisations that Government forces backed up the Janjaweed's raids on villages with aerial bombardment and ground troops.

It is suspected that the camp visited by the U.S. delegation may have been "sanitised" by the Sudanese Government.

Mr. Powell spoke of encouraging the refugees to return home and his spokesman, Richard Boucher, told reporters that people in the camps "were telling us they wanted to go home". But refugees have consistently told journalists that they have no desire to return home because of their fear of the Janjaweed.

Earlier this week, refugees in Abu Shouk told the *Washington Post* that Sudanese Government agents had warned them to keep quiet about their experiences when Mr. Powell visited them. The Secretary of State's visit coincides with that of the U.N. Secretary

General, Kofi Annan, who arrived yesterday and is due in Darfur on Thursday.

A diverse American constituency, combining the Christian right, African-Americans and Jews, has taken an interest in the wars in Sudan. The Christian lobby and black groups have expressed concern about the civil war between Christian and animist southerners and Muslim northerners. Jewish groups have been touched by claims that the Darfur war is genocidal.

The Bush administration played a significant role in resolving the civil war in southern Sudan. In a peace deal signed last month, the Government and the Sudan People's Liberation Army agreed to share oil revenues and power.

Relations between the U.S. and Sudan's Islamist dictatorship, which once harboured Osama bin Laden, have been slowly warming, but the Darfur crisis threatens to set back the thaw.

Britain has been criticised by aid agencies and human rights groups for being "too soft" on the Sudanese Government. An aid agency spokesman said: "While [Britain] has been very generous with humanitarian aid, their lack of tough political action at the U.N. Security Council has contradicted this. Their diplomatic approach clearly hasn't worked." — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2004



# MANDELA'S SOUTH AFRICA

Africa  
5/16/96

## The Parallels With India Are Instructive

By SWAGATO GANGULY

Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela, who will surely be remembered as one of the greatest statesmen of the 20th century, has announced his decision to step down from public life at a very symbolic moment — with South Africa's multiracial government completing a decade of existence. Mandela shot into worldwide prominence when the white government of South Africa placed him under solitary confinement for 27 years. At one point, the international campaign against apartheid and the suppression of black aspirations in South Africa became identified with the campaign for obtaining Mandela's release. Given the brutality of the apartheid regime, which was made palpable to almost everybody born on the wrong side of the colour line, many had expected city streets to run with blood when power changed hands in 1994. That this didn't happen, and that the transfer of power to the African National Congress was entirely peaceful, was almost wholly due to Nelson Mandela. If Mandela could forgive those who had confined him for 27 years, the rest of the nation could follow.

### Two nations

In 1995 the South African government established the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, whose task was to provide an objective record of human rights violations that took place during the apartheid era. It was an unprecedented experiment that ensured that injustices of the era were remembered rather than swept under the carpet, while providing for amnesty proceedings for those guilty.

The role Mandela played in bringing about racial reconciliation led to his being awarded the Nobel Prize in 1993, along with President FW de Klerk who released him from prison and agreed to hold the multiracial elections of 1994. From fears of a bloodbath only ten years back racial tensions have all but vanished in the new South Africa, an extraordinary achievement. In addition, Mandela stepped down and relinquished power after his first term as President, although he could have easily won again. South Africa, like India, started out as a Third World democracy.

Mandela's role in bringing about racial reconciliation ranks perhaps with the courageous role that Gandhi played during communal violence in Noakhali in 1946, although Mandela appears to have been rather more successful in stemming violence than Gandhi was. Gandhi's concept of *satyagraha* was, of course, born in South Africa, and India's Congress party greatly influ-

enced the African National Congress, down to the similarity in nomenclature. Mandela and the ANC stuck to civil disobedience methods till 1961, when police in Sharpeville shot down 70 unarmed protesters in cold blood, and the ANC was banned.

It must be noted that the apartheid government in South Africa represented a settler colonialism, more difficult to confront than British colonialism in India. The British were dependent on the cooperation of Indians for running their empire; it was therefore vulnerable

to a strategy of withdrawing that cooperation, which is what Gandhi brought about. South African apartheid, on the other hand, depended on seizure of most of the country's land and resources by the white minority, and herding the black populations into "homelands" or infertile strips of land that were notionally autonomous. Black labourers lived either in the homelands or in shantytowns, allowed to enter white areas only for restricted periods. The government, therefore, controlled the very conditions of existence of coloured people.



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### Armed revolution

In 1961 the ANC decided that civil disobedience alone could not topple the government, and Mandela helped form the Umkonto we Sizwe ("Spear of the Nation"), the guerrilla arm of the ANC. Rather than killing people, however, the ANC directed its violence at government installations, symbols of apartheid, and economic infrastructure. This stands in sharp contrast to many of today's "liberation" movements, which think nothing of civilian massacres and large-scale terror to achieve their goals.

It is interesting to pose the historical question why the British did not encourage too many settlers in India, given popula-

tion pressures at home when they were conquering India in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Raja Rammohan Roy pleaded that the British send more settlers to India, to modernize and develop agriculture. If the British had complied, India may have been more like French-controlled Algeria or Afrikaner-controlled South Africa, and Gandhian methods may not have sufficed in dislodging the colonizer.

A possible answer to the historical conundrum is that the British were afraid of repeating the American experience, where

settlers rebelled against the Crown and established an independent republic. In South Africa the Boers, too, fought an extended war against the British. Quite a few British officials in India had been previously burnt in America, the most notable example being Governor-General Lord Cornwallis, who presided over the humiliating British surrender at Yorktown. If the British preferred to rule through Indian intermediaries, we may owe that at least partially to the Boston Tea Party.

To pursue the Gandhi parallel further, Gandhi walked out of the first free Indian government, but left Jawaharlal Nehru in charge. Mandela became President during the first free elections in 1994, but left day-to-day matters to his deputy Thabo Mbeki, a leftwing Anglicized intellectual like Nehru. During the second elections in 1999, Mandela stepped down and passed the official baton to Mbeki. With Mbeki's decisive victory in the third national elections this year, Mandela bowed out of public life altogether. Which suggests another parallel: just as the Congress dominated political life in India in the early years since independence, the ANC is managing to do the same in South Africa.

One-party dominance in the

early years of independence has benefits as well as dangers. Both can clearly be seen in India and South Africa. On the plus side, dominance by one party allowed the countries time to establish their own traditions, and set the stage for future political stability. Which, however, leads to the second part of the equation. Political monopolies can be just as bad as economic monopolies, as they lead to complacency in governance.

### Leftwing legacy

The Indian leadership did not emphasize universal schooling to the extent other Asian governments have done, leading to today's crises of illiteracy, mass poverty and child labour. According to the latest human development report issued by the UNDP, in terms of youth literacy India's closest compatriots in East Asia are Laos and Cambodia. Even Myanmar and Vietnam have pulled far ahead. This means even when the Indian economy shines few can capitalize, as skilled jobs are available only to an educated minority. Even India's extravagant casteisms and communalisms can be traced to the lack of universal schooling — put kids from different castes and communities in the same school, teach them a non-sectarian syllabus, and watch today's sharp caste and communal antagonisms disappear within a generation.

If there is one area where South Africa's multiracial government has slipped badly, it is AIDS. Pretoria didn't see the HIV/AIDS epidemic coming; Mbeki even thought there was no link between the HIV infection and AIDS, and warnings about the gravity of the AIDS threat were a concoction of Western pharmaceutical industries. Inaction on the AIDS front, nourished by leftwing conspiracy theories, cost South Africa plenty — a staggering one out of every five adults now carry the infection. Likewise, it is arguable that leftwing theories have cost India plenty, both in terms of economic growth and national security.

Just as India remains influential, despite its aberrations, as one of the earliest and largest Third World democracies, South Africa suggests new human possibilities despite AIDS, high crime, and huge economic inequalities.

Within a decade it has gone from a violently segregated society to a tolerant and de-segregated society, without shedding much blood on the way. In today's world of bitter polarizations Mandela's South Africa suggests that reconciliation of apparently intractable differences, peacefully, is possible and attainable.

**SUDAN ACCORD / VICE-PRESIDENCY FOR REBEL LEADER**

Africa  
AD-15  
26/1

# Decades of civil war ends

**NAIVASHA (KENYA), MAY 27.** Sudan's Government and the main rebel group have signed several accords crucial to ending 21 years of devastating civil war in the south of the vast country.

The three protocols signed by Khartoum and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army on Wednesday on power-sharing and the administration of three disputed regions cap two years of intense political negotiations in Kenya.

Following their signature, the technical and military aspects of a ceasefire are the only remaining obstacles to a comprehensive peace accord to end Africa's longest-running conflict. These negotiations do not, however, cover the crisis in Sudan's western region of Darfur, where a more recent conflict has left hundreds of thousands of people at risk of starvation in what the United Nations has decried as the world's worst humanitarian crisis.

Nevertheless, the signing, which took place at a lakeside hotel near the western Kenyan town of Naivasha, prompted a cacophony of cheers and ulula-



**A NEW DAWN:** Holding a People's Liberation Army flag, Sudanese celebrate the signing of peace accords between the Government and the rebels, in Naivasha, Kenya, on Wednesday. — AP

tions from hundreds of Sudanese refugees.

Hours after the adversaries signed the agreements, mediators consulted with the Suda-

nese Government and the southern rebels to plan the final phase of talks. In Wednesday's protocols, they agreed that the Sudanese President, Omar el-

Bashir, will remain head of state during the interim period, while the rebel leader, John Garang, will become Vice-President. — AP

WEDNESDAY, MAY 5, 2004

10-10

## A HIGHWAY FOR INTEGRATION

95

THE CONCLUSION OF a landmark agreement among 23 countries for a 140,000-km Asian Highway Network (AHN) in Shanghai marks the culmination of a protracted exercise under the aegis of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (ESCAP). The project, to integrate Asia and provide a huge network of highways to link the countries, was conceived way back in 1959 but it was only in 1992 that it received the backing of some of the Governments in the region. After 12 years, 23 of the 32 countries to be linked by the AHN have signed the agreement. This project is just one part of a larger Asian Land Transport Infrastructure Development programme of ESCAP, which was firmed up in 1992. An ambitious Trans-Asian Railway and facilitation of land transport projects are the other two components of the programme. The AHN envisages a critical mass of road network that will extend from Tokyo to Teheran and Singapore to Samarkand. Island nations such as Japan, the Philippines and Sri Lanka will have a ferry link to complete the network. If the Governments cooperate, the highway network should be operational by 2010.

The AHN was basically envisaged to help the land-locked countries get over the bottlenecks in trade and transport by creating a network that would make all countries in the Asia-Pacific region accessible by road. Given the fact that road transport, besides enabling the development of the entire hinterland, can be easier and cheaper, the AHN will provide easy passage for people as well as cargo. In an era of globalisation such a network should provide a significant boost to intra-Asian trade and movement of goods and passengers. Why the governments of the region took so long to agree on creating this network is a puzzle, although funding the

huge infrastructure development remains a hurdle to be overcome. China will have the lion's share of the network with over 25,000 km, followed by the Russian Federation (16,869 km), Kazakhstan (13,189 km), India (11,432 km) and Iran (11,152 km). With over 50,000 km, the East and Northeast Asian region will account for the bulk of the network. ESCAP has described it as the first inter-governmental agreement developed under its auspices.

At a time when many countries are feeling the "strain of becoming an economic power house," the AHN should be a boon to the Indo-China region, the Central Asian Republics and most of Northeast Asia. It will also provide the more developed countries in the region a cheaper means of transporting goods to these areas. There has been talk of making the 21st Century the 'Asian century', although some would contest that and look at it more as a 'Pacific Century'. The AHN and the Trans-Asian Railway are two excellent ways for the whole of Asia to be integrated economically and politically. The potential that a road network will offer for the development of tourism cannot possibly be overestimated. Given the inexhaustible cultural wealth Asia offers, the AHN may make it more attractive and put it within easy reach of budget tourists who need to spend their life's savings on transport by air. Without stopping with the road network, ESCAP, which is headquartered in Bangkok, should push for the Trans-Asian Railway. Putting together missing links here and there could gift a huge asset to the countries concerned. Considering the medium- and long-term economic gains from such infrastructure projects, funding should be within reach. Keeping the big picture in mind and with a further determined exercise of political will, the projects should be implemented without further delay.

# S Africa savours a decade of multi-racial democracy

The Times, London

PRETORIA, April 27. — Mr Thabo Mbeki was greeted by a Zulu praise singer, choirs and cheers from a crowd of 40,000 as he was sworn in for a second five-year term as President of South Africa today.

But he was not the only leader feted at the ceremony, which also marked the tenth anniversary of multiracial democracy in South Africa and freedom from apartheid.

When giant screens showed the arrival of President Mugabe of Zimbabwe there were deafening cheers from the mainly black audience on the lawns below Pretoria's historic Union Buildings and a standing ovation from many of the politicians present.

Dozens of Presidents, kings and ministers, including Vice-President Mr Bhairon Singh Shekawat, attended the festivities.



CRY FREEDOM: Women dressed in traditional costume sing and dance to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the end of apartheid and the swearing-in of South African President Mr Thabo Mbeki in Pretoria on Tuesday. — AFP

Also among the guests were the country's last white President, Mr FW de Clerk, and Mr Nelson Mandela. He received a tumultuous reception at the amphitheatre where he was sworn in as President ten years earlier amid fears that ethnic tensions would push South Africa into civil war.

Instead Mr Mbeki was able to promise the crowd that he would continue working to transform South Africa into a peaceful, democratic, non-racist, non-sexist and prosperous country for all its peoples. "Today we begin our second decade of democracy," Mr Mbeki told the gathering.

17/10/12

## ANC AGAIN

22/1

TEN YEARS AFTER South Africa voted in the African National Congress in the country's first free election, the party is more popular than ever. No anti-incumbency factor has made itself felt through the decade of ANC rule. The party's victory with nearly 70 per cent of the votes in the third general election last week was its most resounding yet. One reason for its enduring popularity is the role it played in the struggle against apartheid. The humiliation and trauma of racial segregation are still fresh in the memory of non-white South Africans. Their loyalty to the party of liberation overrides politics. But as the party of government too, the ANC has a good report card. Defying white pessimism that a South Africa governed by its black people would go the way of most other African countries after liberation, the ANC has in record time rebuilt the country's institutions and adopted a new Constitution, praised as one of the best in the world. Despite the economic limitations it inherited from the de Klerk regime, post-apartheid South Africa has managed to keep a reasonable annual growth rate. The government has worked to improve the living conditions of millions of black South Africans. The country is Africa's main economic and industrial powerhouse; its standing in the international community has been restored; and its President, Thabo Mbeki, leads an initiative for the economic revival of the entire continent.

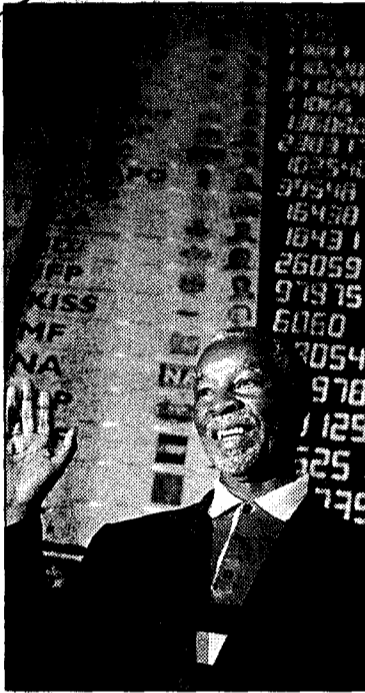
The overwhelming victory of the ANC has raised fears of South Africa turning into a one-party state with a high-handed government. But such apprehensions appear misplaced given that one of the biggest achievements of the party in its first two terms in power has been the establishment of a stable, peaceful and vibrant democracy. True, the country does not

have strong opposition parties but the blame for that can hardly be laid at the ANC's door. As many as 21 political parties contested this election at the national level. The main opposition, the Democratic Alliance, secured only 12 per cent of the votes because its white leadership and its campaign that revolved around the ANC monopoly bogey held no appeal for the mass of black voters. But while South African opposition parties have failed to come up with credible programmes that might win them more supporters, an active civil society, a vigorous free press, and a robust judiciary have thus far acted as effective checks and balances on the government. They will surely keep a sharp watch over the party's third term in office.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu once described South Africa as a "miracle of the 20th century" but even miracles are imperfect. The vote for the ANC is as much a mandate for future good governance as it is a reward for its sacrifices and past accomplishments. Poverty, unemployment and high crime rates remain serious problems. But South Africa's gravest crisis is that more than five million of its people — nearly 11 per cent of the population — are HIV positive. The country lost valuable time in the battle against AIDS because of the leadership's own early confusion about the disease and the prejudices surrounding the treatment that delayed the distribution of life-saving drugs to the afflicted. The AIDS pandemic is perhaps the biggest threat that South Africa faces. The ANC government and Mr. Mbeki, who is assured of a second five-year term when the new National Assembly meets to elect a President later this month, must fight it with the same dedication that they brought to the fight against apartheid.

# ANC landslide buries apartheid's heirs

Associated Press  
Johannesburg, April 16



AP  
ANC president Thabo Mbeki in front of the election results board in Pretoria on South Africa.

1074

SOUTH AFRICA'S ruling party, the African National Congress (ANC) won its most dramatic victory election yet on Friday as the country's voters showed their loyalty to the party that led them out of apartheid.

Preliminary results showed ANC had just under 70 per cent support nationally, more than enough to ensure President Thabo Mbeki a second term. The vote for the New National party, the successor to the National party which enforced white minority rule for 40 years, collapsed from 7 per cent to just under 2 per cent, showing a profound shift by Afrikaners.

Its leader, Marthinus van Schalkwyk, rejected calls to resign. "We would have liked to have done bet-

ter," he said, "but we remain absolutely committed to our message and our approach." The country's electoral commission must confirm the results of Wednesday's vote before they are official, but the ANC was leading in all nine provinces.

The new president will be sworn in on April 27, the day South Africa celebrates a decade of multi-racial democracy. The New National party, the reincarnation of the party that kept South Africa under nearly half a century of apartheid, won less than 2 per cent of the vote, and appears on the road to political obscurity as little more than a regional party. Only an alliance with its former enemy, the ANC, could still give it a role in national government. The two parties are expected to meet in the coming days to discuss the positions.

THE HINDUSTAN TIMES

17 APR 2004

## Third democratic poll in SA

DURBAN, April 14. — South Africans cast ballots today in the country's third democratic elections, expected to give another mandate to the ruling African National Congress which spearheaded the movement against the apartheid regime that ended ten years ago.

More than 23 million people have registered as voters to elect 400 members of the National Assembly and representatives to the country's legislatures in the nine provinces.

Former President and the hero of the anti-apartheid movement Nelson Mandela turned up to vote in Johannesburg and said: "I feel elated as I am able to vote again... I sincerely hope that the entire world will abandon violence and use peaceful methods of asserting their rights as citizens." President Thabo Mbeki said: "No one will know the who the people will be voting for". He was referring to reports of the tense situation in KwaZulu-Natal where his ANC and the Zulu party are in an intense battle. — PTI



Mr Thabo Mbeki casts his vote. — AFP

THE STATESMAN

13 APR 2004

# Rwanda: the victim's licence

By George Monbiot Africa

FIRST encountered the phenomenon of Victim's Licence when arguing on a radio show with a British importer of mahogany from the Amazon. I had pointed out that the timber cutters who supplied him were hiring gunmen to shoot indigenous people. "Well," he replied, "life is cheap in Brazil." I told him that was a shocking thing to say. "Don't you lecture me about human rights," he snapped. "My parents were killed in the Holocaust."

And, of course, he put me on the back foot. I mumbled something to the effect that he of all people should know the consequences of waiving the value of human life. But despite his evident hypocrisy, he had acquired moral authority: he had suffered horribly as a result of mass murder; I had not.

It is partly for this reason that we overlook the atrocious crimes committed by the Government of Rwanda. Over the past fortnight, as we commemorated the Rwandan genocide of 1994, the Kagame Government's foreign policy was all but ignored. The good guys were murdered by the bad guys; the good guys fought back, drove the bad guys out, formed a new government, and peace came to a troubled land. This is the story our fairytale view of history demands: the victims remain victims, the aggressors remain aggressors. They are permitted to change places only when, like the Afghan Mujaheddin, they find themselves on the wrong side of the geopolitical fence. Until then, the crimes the victims might commit are licensed by compassion and embarrassment.

After the genocide in Rwanda, many of the perpetrators — assisted,

disgracefully, by French soldiers — fled to what is now the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Paul Kagame's Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) chased them over the border, helped Congolese rebels to capture much of the east of the country, and, in 1997, overthrew President Mobutu. Hunting down the *genocidaires* and deposing the President who sheltered them could both be judged legitimate means of securing peace in Rwanda, but Mr. Kagame's army also had other interests.

The misfortune of the Congolese is that they possess tremendous natural wealth. This means, as it has meant in all such places, that they are perpetually exposed to theft, expulsion, slavery and murder. We know all about the crimes of men like King Leopold II of Belgium and President Mobutu. We are less ready to notice the crimes of Mr. Kagame.

Six foreign armies have been involved in the theft of the DRC's resources over the past 10 years, but Rwanda's was singled out by the United Nations' report on the catastrophe there for the "institutional" nature of its piracy. The plunder was not caused by an ill-disciplined army running out of control. It was a deliberate policy, commissioned and implemented by the Rwandan Government.

By 1999, the "Congo Desk" of the Rwandan army was generating 80 per cent of the Rwandan military budget — some \$320 million. This is the equivalent of 20 per cent of

than the Interahamwe. Mr. Kagame formally withdrew his troops from the DRC in 2002, but before doing so he made sure that its wealth continued to flow into Rwanda. The prosperity which has helped to secure peace in Rwanda derives in large part from the plunder which has helped to sustain war in the DRC.

So last week we saw one of the world's bloodiest war criminals standing in the national stadium in Kigali, holding a red rose and announcing that "We cannot turn the clock back ... but we have the power to determine the future and to ensure that what happened never happens again." No one complained. No one pointed out that, thanks to his army, it has already happened, again and again. By preserving the fairytale, we license the victim to keep committing the crime.

It is arguable that nothing so endangers world peace and human rights as official victimhood. Hitler played upon the German people's grievances about the reparations exacted from them after the First World War. The allies overlooked the expulsion of 3 million Sudeten Germans from Czechoslovakia after the second world war. The Israeli Government insists that anyone who criticises its human rights record is "anti-semitic," a participant, in other words, in the oppression of the Jews.

George Bush claims that America has a right to take its war on terror wherever he pleases, as a result of the atrocity it suffered in 2001. We must never forget the appalling crimes from which they draw their licence. But if we really wish to ensure that it "never happens again," we must judge people by what they do rather than by who they are. — ©Guardian Newspapers Limited 2004

***If we really wish to ensure that it "never happens again," we must judge people by what they do rather than by who they are.***

dan Government. Mr. Kagame's people, in other words, had a near-monopoly on global coltan production.

The RPF's original excuse for intervention disappeared pretty rapidly — in fact it soon linked up with the Hutu killers it was supposed to be hunting, and used them to help control the region. Instead, according to the UN: "With minor exceptions, the objective of [its] military activity is to secure access to mining sites or ensure a supply of captive labour."

Ten days ago, Alison des Forges wrote for the *Guardian* that: "There is no equivalence, of course, in the kind of crimes charged to the RPF and the crime of genocide." It is true that the Rwandan army never sought to exterminate the people of the eastern Congo. It is also true that its displacement of local people, who fled as it burned their villages and seized their resources, caused more deaths



# Rwanda — an abnormal, traumatised society

APRIL 5  
17 BY TORY CARROLL

KIGALI, APRIL 5. Wearing a white dress and an uncertain smile, Irene Mutoni gazes from her cot, a two-year-old girl in a fading photograph. Her favourite food, says the caption, was banana and rice. Her favourite toy was a stuffed dog. Her first word was daddy. Her method of death was drowning in boiling water.

Tacked to the wall are dozens of photographs of other murdered children with the same basic information, just one segment of a new memorial centre in Kigali which will open on Wednesday for the 10th anniversary of Rwanda's genocide.

Politicians and ordinary Rwandans, Tutsi and Hutu, are due to attend the ceremony. There will be a plaque, speeches, a moment of silence for the victims, and then life will go on. Survivors, perpetrators and their relatives will return to homes and workplaces, as if this were a normal country.

In a way it is. Rwanda is peaceful and stable, even staid. Kigali is one of Africa's safest cities.

A decade after Hutu extremists slaughtered 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus in 100 days, there is a Tutsi-led elected government preaching unity and

reconciliation. The peace is solid. To have reached this stage after just 10 years is a remarkable accomplishment.

But Rwanda is an abnormal, traumatised society. Tolerance between mistrustful neighbours reflects not a miracle of forgiveness but the will of an authoritarian regime.

"It's too early for real reconciliation. That's for future generations," said Rakiya Omar, a Rwanda expert with African Rights, a human rights watchdog. "People are coexisting because they have no choice. Where would they go?"

Few claim to know the hearts and minds of central Africa's most under-monstrative people, and more than one western diplomat confessed to not 'getting' how Hutus and Tutsis still share such a tiny, crowded country.

One obvious reason is that the President, Paul Kagame, insists they do. Leader of the Tutsi rebels who ousted the genocidal Hutu regime, he now wears civilian clothes but rules like a general and squashes opponents as 'divisionists' who stoke ethnic rivalry.

Since Tutsis make up less than 15% of the population, Mr Kagame needs Hutu support to stay in power, so promoting "unity" is a political imperative. Officialdom frowns on using the terms Hutu

and Tutsi.

Rwanda is about to get its first private radio stations since the genocide and newspapers have started exposing government corruption, but Human Rights Watch, among others, worries the lid on dissent is too tight, allowing resentment to build.

After intimidating opponents, Mr Kagame won 95 per cent of the vote in last year's presidential election and his coalition won three-quarters of parliamentary seats, disappointing observers who hoped for freer, fairer ballots. "It's easy for outsiders to criticise but if we open political space who do you think is going to fill it?" said Musare Faustin, a presidential adviser.

The genocide's masterminds are in jail or in hiding, but the grievances and prejudices they exploited endure. It would not take much to whip up resentment.

Rwanda's economy has grown spectacularly in the past five years. New buildings pop up like toast on Kigali's skyline, tourists are trickling back to gorilla parks and foreign donors are content since Rwanda stopped openly stoking Congo's civil war.

But outside the capital it is the old story of too many peasants with too little

land, the claustrophobia aggravated by property disputes between growing families and returning refugees.

## Ethnic rivalry

There was no inevitability, no ancient enmity, about 1994. It was Belgian colonialists who turned ethnic rivalry deadly by selecting taller, lighter-skinned Tutsis to rule over the shorter, darker Hutus. Periodic massacres after independence emboldened Hutu extremists to wipe out the uppy minority.

The hate ideology is gone but homicidal impulses may linger. "You hear people say that if Kagame is killed we will eat the Tutsis' cows — a euphemism for killing the owners," said Ms. Omar, though she considers the atmosphere more relaxed than at any time in the past decade.

In Murambi, three hours' drive south of Kigali, Emmanuel Murangira is still waiting for an apology for the death of 49 relatives, including his wife and three children, who were among the estimated 40,000 Tutsis killed in the local school.

The Kigali memorial centre dropped plans to use 'reconciliation' as the title of the final segment, dealing with the genocide's aftermath. — © *Guardian Newspapers Limited 2004*

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AFG  
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# Harare raises death spectre

1/3

**Harare/Dakar, March 10** (Reuters): Zimbabwe threatened today to execute some 60 suspected mercenaries detained this week and accused US, British and Spanish spy agencies of involvement in a plot to topple Equatorial Guinea's government.

Equatorial Guinea, which has arrested what it called an advance party of 15 mercenaries, said "enemy powers" and multinational companies had been plotting against the small oil-producing central African state. The two countries, some 2,000 miles apart, have put their security forces on high alert since Zimbabwe detained a Boeing 727 carrying about 60 men, most of them South Africans, Angolans and Namibians, both white and black, on Sunday. Associates of the men say they are innocent mine guards swept up in a bizarre misunderstanding.

"They are going to face the severest punishment available in our statutes, including capital punishment. We will give them all the rights they are entitled to," Zimbabwean foreign minister Stan Mudenge told a news briefing.

"They were aided by the British secret service, that is MI6, (the) American Central Intelligence Agency and the Spanish secret service," Zimbabwe's home affairs minister Kembo Mohadi said. Mohadi, whose country has been bitterly at odds in recent years with Washington and former European colonial powers, said Equatorial Guinea's police and army heads had gone along with the plot against President Teodoro Obiang Nguema Mbasogo.

The CIA declined to comment on Zimbabwe's spying charge, but US officials denied the allegation. "There was no US interest or involvement in such a plot," said one US official, speaking on condition of anonymity. Spain also denied involvement in any plot in the former Spanish colony.

A British foreign office spokeswoman said: "I have no information on whether any security services were involved at all. But we certainly wouldn't comment on our security services anyway."

Zimbabwe state television showed a cargo of what it called "military material" aboard the plane, seized on Sunday after flying into Harare from South Africa. The gear included camouflage uniforms, sleeping bags, compasses and wire cutters but no guns. Obiang said in a speech late yesterday foreign countries had conspired to overthrow him and replace him with an exiled politician living in Spain.

Mercenaries for mine security

# Congo twist to jet puzzle

Africa 7.3 10/3

**Johannesburg, March 9** (Reuters): A plane seized in Zimbabwe carrying 64 people whom the Harare government suspects of being mercenaries was bound for the Democratic Republic of Congo to provide security guards for mines, its operator said today.

"They were going to eastern DRC. They stopped in Zimbabwe to pick up mining equipment, Zimbabwe being a vastly cheaper place for such things," said Charles Burrow, a senior executive of Logo Logistics Ltd which had chartered the Boeing 727 freighter.

He said by telephone from London that most of the people on board were South African and had military experience, but were on contract to four mining companies in Congo. He declined to name the companies.

Burrows denied any knowledge of a group of "15 mercenaries" which the government of the west African state of Equatorial Guinea said it had arrested today and said they were linked to the plane impounded at Harare. "I haven't the foggiest idea of what they're talking about," he said.

Zimbabwe authorities said yesterday they had impounded the plane and its passengers at Harare airport on Sunday when it said the crew made a false declaration. Today, Zimbabwe said it had put its army on full alert. "We have mobilised all our security organs to get to the bottom of this case," a government official said who declined to be identified.

In a separate statement faxed to Reuters, Logo Logistics,



**A Zimbabwean official inside the US-registered cargo plane at Harare airport. (AP)**

which is registered in Britain's Channel Islands, said the group was contracted "to provide a range of services to mining clients, including logistics, support services, asset and human security". It disputed the statement by Zimbabwe which said military equipment had been seized on the plane.

"What had been described as 'military equipment' in some earlier reports now has been shown to be items such as boots, tools, pipe-bending and other equipment, wire-cutting and connecting tools, and similar," it said. "All are items normally sourced in South Africa, as they are difficult and expensive to obtain elsewhere in southern Africa."

# Nigeria flip-flop on Pak 'nuke offer'

AP/CP

Agencies

ABUJA, March 4 — The Nigerian government today withdrew a statement made yesterday claiming that Pakistan's defence chief had offered to help Nigeria acquire nuclear power, adding it was a mistake and should be ignored.

"The reference to nuclear power in the statement earlier issued was a mistake, a typographical error," defence ministry spokesman Mr Nwachukwu Bellu said. He said the portion of the statement on nuclear power issued after yesterday's meeting between visiting chairman of Pakistan's joint chiefs of staff, General Muhammad Aziz Khan, and Nigeria's defence minister Mr

## 'Sunni ultras behind Qetta firing'

ISLAMABAD, March 4. — The deadly attack on a Shiite procession in Qetta bears the marks of a banned Sunni extremist group with links to the Al-Qaida, investigators said today.

A machine gun, believed to be used in the attack, was engraved with the name Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, and bullet casings were inscribed with venomous anti-Shiite words, according to one of the investigators. The sub-machine gun bearing the Jhangvi's name was found in the room from where two men fired at the procession, said the investigator. "We also found around 200 empty bullet casings from the room, each inscribed with words of hatred against Shi'ites," he said.

Four men had hired the rooms 10 days before Muharram on Tuesday. They told the owner they wanted to set up a computer workshop. — AFP

Rabiu Musa Kwankwaso in Abuja, should be ignored.

In Islamabad, Pakistan foreign minister Mr Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri today said the report of Pakistan offering nuclear assistance to Nigeria was "unadulterated rubbish".

"This is such an unadulterated rubbish. For a Pakistani General who is travelling these days to offer nuclear help,"

Pakistan foreign minister Mr Khurshid Mehmood Kasuri told reporters here.

In Islamabad, Mr Kasuri said

Pakistan "is working out the dynamics of how they can assist Nigeria's armed forces to strengthen its military capability and to acquire nuclear power".

"This tells you sometimes how media picks up stories. I do not know what to say. Why would Pakistan do this," Mr Kasuri said, adding if Pakistan wants Abuja's help to regain the Commonwealth membership, there were other ways to go about it.

**Shaheen-II test:** Pakistan is likely to test-fire its long range Shaheen-II missile, that could cover over 2,000 km, between 6 and 9 March. Unlike previous tests, Pakistan this time has decided to test-fire the missile over sea in view of the distance it has to cover, officials said.

## Dubai 'does it too'

Stating that Dubai provides congenial environment for masking destination of illegal merchandise, including those which could be used for nuclear reactors and weapons, an article in the *New York Times* asks Washington to treat it like a "smuggler" unless it cleans up the act, adds a report from New York.

Among the examples it gives are four in which it alleges that heavy water for the Indian nuclear power plants passed through Dubai in 1982, 1983, 1985 and 1986. Others include materials for nuclear weapons for Iraq and other countries being routed through it, it said quoting director of the Wisconsin Project on Nuclear Arms Control Mr Gary Milhollin.



Pakistan's foreign minister Mr Kasuri rejected the report as unadulterated rubbish.

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2004

## AFRICA'S GAMBLE

Africa 80-10

A PEER REVIEW system that 17 African countries have adopted in order to monitor one another for compliance with global standards of good governance marks an unprecedented development in the world's poorest continent. The review, which is due to begin in a few weeks, is an integral part of the New Partnership for African Development that seeks to end the continent's economic marginalisation in a rapidly globalising world. The NEPAD, championed by South African President Thabo Mbeki and Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo and launched in 2001, essentially commits African Governments to democracy and good governance in return for greater aid and investment from the developed economies. Countries in the 53-member African Union can join NEPAD by signing up to its Democratic and Political Governance Initiative — a set of 12 commitments and eight actions — and by agreeing to an external review every three years by a panel of eminent Africans, with the first round of reviews to be completed by 2006. Thus far, only 17 countries have agreed to be reviewed. Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda and Mauritius will be the first four to go under scrutiny for their compliance with the standards that were adopted at a NEPAD heads of state meeting recently.

In a region marred by conflict, political instability and poverty, and sensitive to interference by outsiders, this new mechanism appears to be just the right homegrown solution for Africa's problems as its supporters project it. But is it really? Aside from the practical difficulties that will arise in demanding that peers implement — through moral pressure only — measures such as a fixed term of office for leaders, there is considerable criticism of the African Union for endorsing the NEPAD initiative as the continent's programme for economic revival without first putting it up for debate and consultation in each member-country. As a result, the initiative has little support from civil society that sees it not as

“an African initiative for Africa” but as a set of top-down preconditions shaped by developed countries, which will enable them to put off their obligations to the continent. Both the United Nations and the G-8 countries have adopted NEPAD as the centrepiece of their Africa policies. For this reason, the fear is that “NEPADisation” of African economies could turn out to be an own goal by tying aid to the fulfilment of certain conditions. While it is questionable if NEPAD can achieve its objective of forging a “new relationship” between Africa and its development partners, it has certainly been divisive for the continent. In spearheading the initiative, South Africa and Nigeria, the two biggest democracies and economies in the continent that also enjoy the most international visibility, have generated suspicion. It is that they are trying to ensure assistance for themselves while setting standards that leaders of other countries may be unable or unwilling to meet, thus cutting out the people of those countries from the aid loop.

Beyond Africa, the peer review system could have consequences for the rest of the world in the way it upends certain accepted rules of play between countries. Most regional groups follow the practice of non-interference in the internal affairs of members, breaking this rule, if at all, only in exceptional circumstances. The Association of South East Asian Nations and the South Asian Association for Regional Co-operation are two examples. But NEPAD is the only multilateral group that makes acceptance of potentially intrusive examination a precondition for membership. The initiative can be interpreted as a desperate move by African leaders to push up the continent on the agenda of the developed economies. There is no guarantee it will succeed especially as it continues to perpetuate the continent's complete dependence on economies whose primary concern is not the welfare of the African people but the furtherance of their own interests.

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