



SCHOOL OF LAW
CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY

War Crimes Prosecution
Watch

PILPG

A Global Pro Bono Law Firm

25 YEARS

FREDERICK K. COX
INTERNATIONAL LAW CENTER

Founder/Advisor
Michael P. Scharf

Faculty Advisor
Jim Johnson

Volume 19 - Issue 6
April 11, 2023

Editor-in-Chief
Matthew Koutsky

Technical Editor-in-Chief
Alexa Stovsky

Managing Editors
Spencer Luckwitz
Harper Fox

War Crimes Prosecution Watch is a bi-weekly e-newsletter that compiles official documents and articles from major news sources detailing and analyzing salient issues pertaining to the investigation and prosecution of war crimes throughout the world. To subscribe, please email warcrimewatch@pilpg.org and type "subscribe" in the subject line.

Opinions expressed in the articles herein represent the views of their authors and are not necessarily those of the War Crimes Prosecution Watch staff, the Case Western Reserve University School of Law or Public International Law & Policy Group.

Contents

AFRICA

NORTH AFRICA

Libya

- **Group says Libyan coast guard fired shots over rescue ship (ABC News)**
- **UN-backed probe cites crimes against humanity in Libya (Associated Press)**

CENTRAL AFRICA

Central African Republic

- **How a shadowy Russian organisation is making political and economic inroads across Africa (Australian Broadcast Corporation.net)**
- **Central African Republic: Atrocities must end, says Volker Türk (UNHCR)**
- **UN: Children in Central African Republic Are Victims of Appalling Abuse, Brutality (VOA News)**

Sudan & South Sudan

- **Sudan's military leader Burhan backs democratic transition (Al Jazeera)**
- **UN experts accuse senior South Sudan officials of rights abuses (Al Jazeera)**

Democratic Republic of the Congo

- **Congo President Tshisekedi brings in former VP Bemba in reshuffle ahead of election (Reuters)**
- **In east DR Congo, displaced Muslims celebrate bleak Ramadan (Agence France-Presse)**
- **Who are the armed groups ravaging the eastern DR Congo?**

WEST AFRICA

Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)

Lake Chad Region – Chad, Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon

- **Hunger and Terrorism: The Humanitarian Crisis in the Lake Chad Basin Region (European Eye on Radicalization)**
- **Troops raid 6 Boko Haram camps, kill terrorists in Borno (The Cable)**
- **Troops repel ISWAP attack on military base in Borno, kill 10 insurgents (The Cable)**
- **ISWAP Commander, Abu Muhammed, executes deputy over military attack on hideout (Vanguard)**
- **Troops kill ISWAP commander, 41 other fighters in Borno (The Guardian)**
- **ISWAP leader executes deputy after Nigeria army kills 41 militants (The East African)**
- **How Buhari Government Failed To Protect Nigerian Civilians From Armed Terror Groups, Criminal Security Officials –Amnesty International Report (Sahara Reporters)**
- **Troops repel another ISWAP attack on military base in Borno – 2nd incident in two days (The Cable)**
- **ISWAP Terrorists Launch Midnight Attack On Nigerian Police Station In Borno State (Sahara Reporters)**

Mali

Liberia

- **Liberia: U.S. Trials of Two Alleged Top Warlords Delayed (allAfrica)**
- **Liberia: Another Ex-Soldier Alleges Former RUF Commander, Gibril Massaquoi Killed Civilians in Monrovia for “Looting” (FrontPageAfrica)**
- **Two Defense Witnesses Say Alleged Sierra Leonean Warlord, Gibril Massaquoi Was in Liberia Early 2000 and 2001, But “with a Peace Delegation” (FrontPageAfrica)**

EAST AFRICA

Uganda

Kenya

- **Human Rights Commission Probes Abuses Of Protests In Kenya (Voice of Nigeria)**

Rwanda

- **Rwanda: Kabuga is Not Fit to Stand Trial - Forensic Psychiatrist (All Africa)**
- **Man who inspired ‘Hotel Rwanda’ gets terrorism charges commuted, will return to U.S. (Global News)**

Somalia

Ethiopia

- **Ethiopia’s new struggle over war crimes accountability (The New Humanitarian)**

EUROPE

Court of Bosnia & Herzegovina, War Crimes Chamber

- **Bosnia Seeks Wartime Army Commander's Extradition from Turkey (Balkan Transitional Justice)**

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia

- **Kosovo Ex-President Thaci's War Crimes Trial Opens in The Hague (Balkan Transitional Justice)**

Domestic Prosecutions In The Former Yugoslavia

- **Yugoslav Ex-Officer Pleads Not Guilty to Croatian Village Attack (Balkan Transitional Justice)**

Turkey

- **Turkish and Egyptian Foreign Ministers Meet as Countries Relaunch Diplomatic Relations (Democracy Now)**
- **Bosnia demands extradition of war criminal from Turkey (Turkish Minute)**
- **Thousands protest the Jindires massacre in Qamishlo (ANF News)**

Kosovo Specialist Chambers

Azerbaijan

Russia

- **Russia-Ukraine war exposed human rights 'double standards' (Al Jazeera)**
- **State Dept. Proposes Joint Tribunal to Try Russian Leaders (New York Times)**
- **Prosecutor General: Russians committed more than 9,000 war crimes in Bucha district (Ukrinform)**
- **Bucha may serve as venue for international tribunal on Russian crimes, PM Shmyhal says (Yahoo News)**
- **Ukraine war: Russian strike on eastern city Kostyantynivka 'kills six' (BBC)**
- **Ukrainian soldier pleads 'partly guilty' at Russia's first war crime trial (Reuters)**
- **Russian official sought by ICC for war crimes speaks to UN (Al Jazeera)**

MIDDLE-EAST

Iraq

Syria

Yemen

Special Tribunal for Lebanon

Israel & Palestine

Gulf Region

ASIA

Afghanistan

- **Former Australian soldier charged with war crime, murder in Afghanistan granted bail (Anadolu Agency)**
- **Minister Seeks Justice against ‘War Crimes Committed’ in Afghanistan (TOLO News)**

Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia

- **CHRC reps check into Samphan’s prison life (The Phnomh Penh Post)**

Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal

- **Rights activists slam US report’s claims about Jamaat (Dhaka Tribune)**
- **Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Mancha Writes To UN, Demands Trial Of Pakistan Army For 1971 Crimes (Republic World)**
- **World silent on efforts by zealots to ethnically cleanse Hindus in Bangladesh (Sunday Guardian)**

War Crimes Investigations in Myanmar

- **Children among 8 killed in Myanmar military air strike (Reuters)**
- **Since coup, nearly 450 civilians killed in Myanmar’s eastern Kayah state (Radio Free Asia)**

AMERICAS

North & Central America

South America

Venezuela

TOPICS

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Terrorism

Piracy

- **Piracy Attacks in GoGSponsored by High-Profile Personalities, Experts Reveal (The Guardian)**
- **Search goes on for oil tanker crew held hostage by pirates in West Africa Hijacking (The National News)**

Gender-Based Violence

Commentary and Perspectives

- **Welcoming Benjamin Netanyahu to No 10 is an insult to British Palestinians like me (The Guardian)**
- **Indonesia’s ASEAN Leadership Tested with Myanmar (Human Rights Watch)**

Aiding and Abetting

WORTH READING

- **Gabriella Blum: The Shadow of Success: How International Criminal Law Has Come to Shape the Battlefield**

AFRICA

NORTH AFRICA

Libya

Group says Libyan coast guard fired shots over rescue ship (ABC News) By Samy Magdy

March 26, 2023

Libya's coast guard fired warning shots over a humanitarian vessel as it attempted to rescue a rubber boat carrying migrants off Libya's coast, a sea rescue group said. The coast guard went on to return some 80 Europe-bound migrants to Libyan soil.

The incident Saturday in international waters was the latest reckless sea interception of migrants by the Libyan coast guard, which is trained and financed by the European Union to stem the influx of migrants to Europe, said the SOS Mediterranean group, whose vessel was warned off by the coast guard.

A spokesman for the coast guard didn't respond to a request for comment. The Italian coast guard said it had received a report about the incident, but complained that SOS Mediterranean didn't follow correct procedures in reporting it.

The Ocean Viking, a rescue ship chartered and run by the non-profit SOS Mediterranean, was responding to a distress call to help the rubber boat carrying migrants in the Mediterranean Sea when a Libyan coast guard vessel arrived at the scene, the group said.

The Libyan coast guard vessel "dangerously" approached the rescue ship, threatening its crew "with guns and firing gunshots in the air," the SOS Mediterranean said in a statement.

The coast guard was caught on camera threatening the vessel and firing a weapon into the air. In the footage, the coast guard vessel is seen traveling at a high rate of speed before maneuvering, apparently to prevent the Ocean Viking from reaching the migrant boat. At one point, gun shots are heard.

"You can't shoot at us. You can't shoot at us. We're leaving the waters now," a person on the Ocean Viking is heard saying.

Under threat, the Ocean Viking sailed away while the Libyan coast guard intercepted the boat and "forcibly" took the migrants back to war-wrecked Libya, it said.

Seabird 2, a civil surveillance plane owned by the German non-governmental organization Sea-Watch, reported seeing migrants who had fallen overboard from the rubber boat before the coast guard recovered them.

In further footage from the group's civil surveillance plane, the coast guard was seen maneuvering and approaching the rubber boat, before forcing the migrants to disembark on the coast guard vessel. Gunshots were also heard in the footage, with people on board the surveillance plane saying, "They are shooting in the water ... They are shooting at the people."

Saturday's incident was the latest report from European NGOs operating in the Mediterranean Sea of threats or violent behavior by the Libyan coast guard, which is trained and financed by the European Union, part of efforts to stem the flow of migrants from the North African country towards Italian shores.

Libya has in recent years emerged as the dominant transit point for migrants seeking a better quality of life in Europe. The oil-rich country plunged into chaos following a NATO-backed uprising that toppled and killed longtime autocrat Moammar Gadhafi in 2011.

Human traffickers have benefited from the chaos in Libya, smuggling in migrants across the country's lengthy borders with six nations. The migrants are then packed into ill-equipped rubber boats and other vessels and set off on risky sea voyages.

So far this year, some 20,000 migrants have arrived in Italy, far exceeding the 6,000 who came in the same period in each of the preceding years, according to Interior Ministry figures.

Over the weekend alone, an estimated 3,300 migrants — many departing on small boats from Libya or Tunisia's coastal city of Sfax — were rescued in the Mediterranean and were heading toward Italian ports to disembark, the Italian coast guard said.

At least three rescues were conducted by the Louise Michel rescue ship, which is financed by the street artist Banksy. The group said its vessel was detained Friday off Lampedusa after it rescued 180 people in several operations. Thirty-four were plucked from the water after their boat capsized.

The Italian coast guard said the vessel had been seized because the crew disobeyed orders to head to a port in Trapani, Sicily after the first rescue and instead picked up other migrants in three other rescues. The coast guard said that disobedience put migrants at risk and complicated its own efforts to coordinate rescues during a particularly busy weekend.

“The instructions given to the NGO ship, given its small size, were also aimed at preventing it from taking on board so many people that would jeopardize both its safety and that of the migrant boats it would be rescuing,” the coast guard said in a statement.

It added that the NGO aircraft that were also sending reports of boats in distress “overloaded the communications system” of the Italian coordination center, duplicating alerts that government aircraft were already providing.

In recent months, the hard-line Italian government of Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has made it harder for humanitarian vessels to operate, often assigning ships to ports farther north after a single rescue, which the groups say limits their ability to save lives.

Meloni's allies say the presence of so many rescue ships in the Mediterranean encourages migrants to risk their lives on smuggler boats.

UN-backed probe cites crimes against humanity in Libya (Associated Press) By Jamey Keaten and Samy Magdy
March 27, 2023

U.N.-backed human rights experts said Monday there is evidence that crimes against humanity have been committed against Libyans and migrants in chaos-stricken Libya, including women being forced into sexual slavery.

The investigators commissioned by the U.N.-backed Human Rights Council also faulted the European Union for sending support to Libyan forces that they say contributed to crimes against migrants and Libyans, and called on EU authorities to review their policies toward Libya.

The findings come in an extensive new report, based on interviews with hundreds of people, including migrants and witnesses, that wraps up a fact-finding mission created nearly three years ago to investigate rights violations and abuses in the North African country. The mission shared its findings with the International Criminal Court.

Oil-rich but largely lawless Libya has in recent years emerged as the dominant transit point for migrants seeking a better quality of life in Europe. Activists have long decried horrible conditions faced by migrants who were trafficked and smuggled across the Mediterranean.

Spokespersons for the government in the capital of Tripoli, which works in western Libya, and the forces of a powerful commander that controls eastern and southern Libya, were not immediately available for comment.

The investigators found “reasonable grounds to believe that crimes against humanity were committed against Libyans and

migrants throughout Libya,” said Mohamed Auajjar, the head of the fact-finding mission. Speaking in Arabic through a translator at a news conference in Geneva, he said his team unearthed “numerous cases of arbitrary detention, murder, torture, rape, enslavement, sexual enslavement and enforced disappearance.”

The Libyan coast guard, which has received training and equipment from the EU, has worked “in close coordination” with trafficking networks in Libya, the report said. The “wide-scale exploitation of vulnerable, irregular migrants” churned up “significant revenue” that spurred continued rights violations, it said.

“The support given by the EU to the Libyan coast guard in terms of pull-backs, pushbacks, (and) interceptions led to violations of certain human rights,” said investigator Chaloka Beyani. “You can’t push back people to areas that are unsafe, and the Libyan waters are unsafe for the embarkation of migrants.”

He said the European bloc and its member states weren’t found to be responsible for war crimes, but “the support given has aided and abetted the commission of the crimes.”

European Commission spokesman Peter Stano told reporters Monday that the EU did not fund the Libyan coast guard “nor any other entity in Libya,” adding that the EU assistance was meant to “improve their performance.”

“We are providing assistance to help them improve their performance when it comes to search and rescue, be it with vessels, be it with equipment, or previously training with a focus exactly on human rights,” he said.

The investigators documented enslavement, rape — “at times at gunpoint” — and other sexual abuse against women and men, including by guards working both for state authorities and trafficking groups.

Investigators cited evidence of crimes against humanity in prisons in parts of eastern Libya controlled by forces of commander Khalifa Hifter, as well as in areas controlled by an umbrella group of militias led by Abdel-Ghani al-Kikli, an infamous warlord known as “Gheniwa” in the capital, Tripoli.

The U.N. migration agency, in its latest report published in mid-March, tallied nearly 700,000 migrants with 42 nationalities in Libya as of the end of last year. The investigators said the situation of human rights has been getting worse.

“The mission’s mandate is ending when the human rights situation in Libya is deteriorating, parallel State authorities are emerging, and the legislative, executive and security sector reforms needed to uphold the rule of law and unify the country are far from being realized,” it said.

Libya was plunged into turmoil after a NATO-backed uprising in 2011 toppled longtime autocrat Moammar Gadhafi, who was later killed, and left the country divided between rival governments on the east and west. The United Nations has been struggling to try to shepherd the country toward new elections.

The International Criminal Court has an ongoing investigation in Libya that was originally called for by the U.N. Security Council during the upheaval that led to Gadhafi’s ouster. In November, ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan said his office had joined a coalition of nations investigating human trafficking in the country.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

CENTRAL AFRICA

Central African Republic

**Official Website of the International Criminal Court
ICC Public Documents - Cases: Central African Republic**

**How a shadowy Russian organisation is making political and economic inroads across Africa
(Australian Broadcast Corporation.net)** By Nick Baker and Chris Bullock

March 30, 2023

With the West's eyes on Russia's strategy, manoeuvres and human rights abuses in Ukraine, is it missing what the country is up to on another continent?

In the last few months, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has visited a list of African countries: Angola, Eswatini (formerly Swaziland), Eritrea, Mali, Mauritania, South Africa and Sudan.

With Cold War-like lines hardening around the world, Lavrov used the visits to push Russia's narrative on Ukraine and slam the West.

"Despite the anti-Russian orgy orchestrated by Washington, London and Brussels, we are strengthening good neighbourly relations in the widest sense of this concept with the international majority," he said in February after an Africa trip.

A middle-aged Russian man with glasses and a suit speaks into a microphone Russia's Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has been stepping up engagement with Africa. (Reuters) But behind the photo ops and handshakes, Russia is playing a much deeper and far less public role there.

Julia Stanyard, a senior analyst with the non-government organisation Global Initiative Against Transnational Organised Crime (GI-TOC), says Russia's most significant presence in Africa is not the Russian state, but a shadowy Russian private company.

"[The Wagner Group] has become the most influential Russian actor in Africa," a new report co-authored by Stanyard states.

This Kremlin-backed group is doing the dirty work of the Russian state across Africa and getting rich along the way.

It's now "an extension or a low-cost outsourcing of Russia's military and diplomatic engagement in the continent", Stanyard tells ABC RN's Sunday Extra.

More than mercenaries

Since the start of the Ukraine conflict, the Russian private company Wagner Group has been making headlines for deploying its mercenaries there.

As the GI-TOC report puts it: "Controlled by a historically close ally of Vladimir Putin, [oligarch] Yevgeny Prigozhin, Wagner has a seemingly mutually beneficial relationship with the Russian state".

Or as Stanyard says: "In sanctions designations by Western countries ... [Wagner] is often described as a proxy of the Russian state. And in many ways, that is true".

The Wagner Group is best known as a mercenary business, with troops in countries around the world, supporting Russian state interests.

But that's not all they do. Far from it. Stanyard portrays Wagner as a sophisticated "ecosystem" or "a network of organisations and companies" out for political and economic gain, particularly in Africa.

First up, politics. The group has "engaged politically in a greater number of countries in Africa than it has militarily".

Through its connected "political strategy organisations", Wagner has the ears of African leaders, interferes with elections and runs anti-Western, pro-Russian disinformation campaigns. Stanyard goes as far as calling it a "political entity" on the continent.

Then there's the economic side of its operations.

Wagner is linked to "a network of companies, primarily mining entities" that are bringing in large sums of money. In some cases, "access to extractive resources has been a quid pro quo arrangement with African governments in return for Wagner's provision of mercenary support".

Stanyard stresses that this includes illegal activities, or "widespread criminal activity".

For example, she says in Sudan, "they've been able to negotiate access to a lot of gold mining sites ... [and] they have conducted really industrial-scale gold smuggling out of the country".

In doing so, Wagner has "evaded sanctions and bolstered the economic profile of Prigozhin, and ultimately Russia as well".

"It is really a rapacious economic aim – to get control and benefit from natural resources in the countries that they operate."

'State capture'

From a military perspective, Wagner has been in Africa since 2017. That year, it deployed troops to Sudan, and shortly after went into the Central African Republic (CAR). It's since deployed to Libya, Mali and had a short-lived intervention in Mozambique.

These military interventions "have largely been in the service of weakened autocratic governments seeking support in fighting insurgencies, rebel groups or civil wars".

The Central African Republic shows what Wagner and the Russians are capable of, with Stanyard going as far as calling it "state capture".

"In exchange for access to natural resources – principally diamonds and gold – Wagner has provided President Faustin Archange-Touadéra with military and political support, which has proven pivotal in sustaining his embattled presidency against an onslaught of rebel groups," the report says.

Over the years, Wagner has developed an "almost independent role in guiding the Central African Republic's military operations", Stanyard says.

They've also been involved with the media there, with Stanyard citing one radio station that's essentially become a Wagner mouthpiece, spreading "propaganda, disinformation campaigns and pursuing the Russian narrative in the country".

"[The CAR is] the most developed example of the Wagner business model in Africa, because it covers these main three prongs to their strategy: The military, the economic and the political."

And this is just one of many countries where Wagner is accused of abuses. A group of UN experts say it was involved in "grave human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law" alongside local troops.

Madagascar

Then there's a country like Madagascar, where Wagner doesn't have a military engagement, but is involved in many other ways.

"Madagascar doesn't have an ongoing conflict in the same way [as those] that Wagner has taken advantage of in some of the other countries," Stanyard says.

Instead, Wagner has been engaging in political interference, particularly in the 2018 presidential election, when a group of Russian political strategists descended on the country.

"Wagner-linked political operatives ... provided direct financial and strategic support to candidates which were deemed friendly to Russia," Stanyard says.

She says they also set up social media disinformation campaigns, facilitated protests and supported certain media outlets, which were intended to "generate this impression of there being these spontaneous political campaigns taking place there".

It paid off. After the election, Stanyard says a new mining company was set up in partnership with a state-owned mining company, which was linked back to Wagner.

Displacing the West

So does the Wagner Group have any overarching aims – and how does this relate to Russia's official interests?

"One of the stated aims of the organisation is to displace Western interests in Africa ... There was a strategy document from inside the organisation that was leaked a few years ago which said as much," Stanyard says.

"And it has been surprisingly effective."

She points to Mali, where French troops had a presence for a number of years, helping the government there fight Islamist militants. But after tensions with the government and the public, France has withdrawn and been replaced with Wagner troops.

A protest in Africa where people hold a sign saying 'merci Wagner' Wagner supporters in Mali last year.(Reuters) "It's become a key political question for some African countries now – where do they choose to have these partnerships?" Stanyard says.

"By providing troops, with no conditionality to these governments about human rights considerations, which you would get with engaging with Western or European powers, Wagner's really been able to bolster its profile in Africa."

Central African Republic: Atrocities must end, says Volker Türk (UNHCR)

March 31, 2023

Rarely has a country with such a dangerously poor human rights record been so forgotten by the rest of the world. The people of Central African Republic (CAR) endure a daily reality of unpredictable spates of violence, where fear is used as a weapon and where severe trauma from years of the same runs deep.

I hold grave concerns that the relentless cycle of communal, religious and ethnic violence that the people of CAR know all too well will escalate even further, with major setbacks for peace and reconciliation efforts.

Every day, the civilian population suffer excessive abuses at the hands of armed groups, defence and security forces, and personnel from private military and security companies. Attacks are only intensifying, and illegal arrests and detentions are widespread.

International human rights and humanitarian law abuses and violations continue to mount and have increased in the past two months. In each quarter of 2022, the number of victims as documented by the Human Rights Division of MINUSCA was markedly higher than the previous – more than doubling from 564 in the first quarter, to 1,300 in the last.

According to evidence available to my Office, State forces and their allies committed 58% of these violations in the last quarter of 2022 – ranging from illegal arrests and detentions, ill-treatment and torture, maiming, and killings. They specifically target the Fulani and Muslim communities, accused or suspected of being accomplices to the armed groups.

In the same period, we estimate that armed groups signatory to the peace agreement were responsible for 35% of the abuses documented, affecting 28% of victims. These abuses consisted mainly of destruction and appropriation of property, killings and other abuses of the right to life, abductions, detention, ill-treatment and maiming.

As raised by a group of UN independent experts in October last year, personnel from private military and security companies continue to violently harass and intimidate civilians, including peacekeepers, journalists, aid workers and minorities. They have also received reports of rape and sexual violence against women, men and young girls.

Mr. President,

Several recent incidents perpetrated by all parties to the conflict highlight the scale and severity of violations. On 28 October 2022, the Central African Armed Forces (FACA) and the internal security forces arbitrarily arrested, detained and extorted 64 civilians in the Bornour area of Bria.

In December, my Office documented two cases of violent rape by the very people supposed to protect civilians: the first by a member of the armed forces in the Nana-Grébizi prefecture, and the second by a police officer in Ippy in the Ouaka prefecture.

Also in December, near Bakouma in Mbomou prefecture, fighters from the Union for Peace in the Central African Republic, part of the Coalition of Patriots for Change, ambushed civilians, shot dead five of them, injured others and looted all their goods.

And more recently, in January 2023 in Ouham-Pendé prefecture, we understand that the Return, Reclamation and Rehabilitation armed group abducted a Fulani herder and two teenage boys, releasing them several days later after the payment of ransoms.

Mr. President,

Children are never spared the ravages of conflict, and in CAR - where children under 14 comprise over 40 percent of the population - their vulnerability is especially acute. They are separated from their parents, causing untold trauma. They are without adequate shelter, they are deprived of education. More than half a million children aged 3-17 in CAR are out of school, or are at risk of having to leave due to a critical lack of qualified teachers and inadequate school facilities.

A lack of healthcare has led to rates of child mortality amongst the highest on the African continent, where one in ten children will die before they reach their fifth birthday.

They are recruited into armed groups, they are detained arbitrarily.

And children, especially girls, are subjected to deplorable acts of conflict-related sexual violence.

Last year, the Human Rights Division documented that 647 children were victims of child rights violations, the majority of which involved the use of children in the armed conflict, attacks on their physical integrity and freedom, arbitrary detentions and conflict-related sexual violence. Other grave violations include killings, maimings and forced labour.

I call on the Government to urgently adopt practical measures to prevent these serious violations and to provide comprehensive care for victims. The economic exploitation of children, as well as their trafficking, are grave crimes that must be immediately addressed.

I also encourage the Government to implement the code of the protection of the child (Law No. 20.014 of 15 June 2020) in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution, as well as its international obligations set out notably in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, its optional protocols on the involvement of children in armed conflict, and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, respectively, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

Mr. President,

Pervasive impunity – including an absence of judicial authorities and the lack of a functioning judicial system -- remains one of the biggest obstacles for the country to surmount.

Compounding this is the deeply fragile security context, extreme poverty, a chronic lack of funding and regional disparities.

Some progress has been made, including investigations of 14 cases by the Special Criminal Court. It issued its first verdict on 31 October last year, finding three former members of an armed group guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes. The February-March criminal session of the Bangui Court of Appeal recently concluded, putting on trial 32 individuals from the Anti-balakas armed group for violence committed in 2017 in Bangassou and other communities in the country's southeast. Twenty-eight were convicted and received sentences. Additionally, the Central African Truth, Justice, Reparation and Reconciliation Commission (CVJRR) has conducted training and awareness-raising and has now established branches in six cities.

But the gaping holes in the justice system remain.

The Bambari Court of Appeal – intended to address cases of human rights violations and abuses - has not yet begun criminal sessions. And the majority of courts which were set up six years ago to try military personnel alleged to have perpetrated human rights violations are still not operational.

Mr President,

I welcome efforts by the CAR authorities to strengthen the human rights protection framework, including the creation of a new management team for the National Commission on Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms.

But much more must be done to address the catastrophic consequences of intense conflict, and the shocking abuses which occur day after day.

I call on all parties to put an end to these atrocities. The authorities have a responsibility to ensure better protection of civilians and to hold all perpetrators to account.

The full launch and functioning of all criminal and other courts, in accordance with international standards, is critical and must be accelerated. The authorities must also provide their full support to the transitional justice institutions, in particular the Special Criminal Court and the CVJRR, so they can effectively carry out their work.

I also urge a strong investment by the Government in the health and education systems.

And for the millions of internally displaced people in particular, it is of the utmost importance that the Government ensures adequate shelter and food, and access to clean water and sanitation facilities.

There are no simple solutions to address the complexity of the violence in CAR and all of its far-reaching consequences. Untenable situations require urgent and decisive responses. I count on the international community to assist and ensure that the people of CAR have the support and resources they need to rebuild their lives.

Thank you.

Delivered By Volker Türk, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights at the 52nd session of The Human Rights Council, in Geneva.

UN: Children in Central African Republic Are Victims of Appalling Abuse, Brutality (VOA News) By

Lisa Schlein
April 3, 2023

A review by U.N. independent experts of the human rights situation in the Central African Republic reveals rampant ethnic violence and systemic gross violations throughout the country with children suffering appalling abuse and brutality at the hands of armed groups, defense and security forces, and private military and security companies.

“It is rare to find a country with a human rights record so alarming, which has been forgotten by the rest of the world,” said Volker Türk, U.N. high commissioner for human rights in his opening salvo at the U.N. human rights council Friday.

“The people of the Central African Republic face a daily reality of sudden spikes of violence where fear is used as a weapon and serious trauma, which has been caused by years of violence.”

He said children were not spared the ravages of the conflict that has been ongoing since 2012, noting that girls especially were subjected to horrific acts of sexual violence linked to the conflict.

“Last year, the Human Rights Division recorded 647 children who were victims of child rights violations. The majority concerning the use of children in the armed conflict, attacks on their physical integrity, their freedom, arbitrary detention, and sexual violence linked to the conflict,” he said.

Virginia Gamba, Special Representative of the U.N. Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict said the number of grave violations committed against children in 2022 had decreased compared to the previous year.

However, she added that conflict continued to take a heavy toll on boys and girls with many being killed and maimed by gunshots and explosive remnants of war.

Sexual abuse

“The recruitment and use of children remained the most prevalent violation verified in 2022,” she said. “While boys were most affected, girls were also recruited and used by parties to conflict and most of them were subjected to sexual violence during their association. Some of the girls became pregnant following the rape.”

She said children were driven to join armed groups because of poverty and protection of their communities from attacks by rival armed groups.

More than a decade of armed conflict has kept the CAR in a state of perpetual impoverishment, hunger, and ill health. The U.N. office for the coordination of humanitarian affairs, OCHA reports more than two million people, or more than one-third of the population needs humanitarian assistance to survive.

A recent U.N. food assessment finds 2.7 million people, nearly half the population, are acutely food insecure, with 642,000 on the verge of famine. OCHA reports hundreds of thousands of people are suffering from acute malnutrition, most are children under age five. In addition, more than half a million children aged three to 17 are out of school, making them susceptible to recruitment, exploitation, and trafficking.

Mohamed Ag Ayoya, deputy special representative of MINUSCA, the U.N. peacekeeping force in CAR warns children continue to be raped, abducted, killed, maimed, and recruited by armed groups and security forces with impunity.

“There is no peace without justice. Despite the government and partners' efforts, there is still a lot of impunity,” he said.

“There are no criminal courts operating. So, rape is often tried as a minor crime, trivialized. And that stops peace and security efforts,” he said. “I urge all partners to support the government to bring an end to inequality and to give justice to the victims of rape.”

Calls for dialogue

The minister said there was no military solution to this long-lasting conflict and urged the warring parties to lay down their weapons and “take up a dialogue for the sake of all children in the country.”

His sentiments were echoed by rights chief Türk who urged the Government to adopt measures to prevent serious violations from occurring and to provide comprehensive care for the child victims.

Arnaud Djoubaye Abazene, minister of state in charge of justice, human rights and good governance of the CAR responded to

these pleas by assuring members of the U.N. human rights council that attention was being paid to all children's issues at the highest level in the country.

"The government is resolved to ensure the protection and promotion of the rights of the child and to combatting the recruitment of children by armed groups.

"The government also reaffirms its commitment to prosecute and punish the perpetrators of crimes against children and other serious human rights violations," he said.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Sudan & South Sudan

**Official Website of the International Criminal Court
ICC Public Documents - Situation in Darfur, Sudan**

Sudan's military leader Burhan backs democratic transition (Al Jazeera)

March 26, 2023

Sudan's military leader General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan has reiterated that the army will be brought under a new civilian-led government as talks on military reforms began on Sunday as part of a prolonged transition to civilian rule.

"During our history, the armed forces have supported dictatorial governments, and we want to put an end to that," al-Burhan, a career soldier during former President Omar al-Bashir's three-decade rule, said in a speech to soldiers on Sunday.

Al-Burhan seized power in the 2021 coup that derailed a short-lived democratic transition following the 2019 ouster of al-Bashir.

The military and political parties signed a deal in December that called for a civilian-led transition government that would oversee elections in two years. However, pro-democracy protest groups opposed the deal, demanding the inclusion of transitional justice and security reforms.

Reform of the security forces is a key point of tension in discussions on the political process launched in December, envisaging generals' exit from politics once a civilian government is installed.

"The process of security and military reform is a long and complicated process and one that cannot be bypassed," al-Burhan said.

The proposed reforms include the integration into the regular army of the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), led by al-Burhan's deputy Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo, widely known as Hemeti.

A long history of military takeovers

Sudan's army has a long history of staging military takeovers and has amassed substantial economic holdings. It wants to see the RSF, which by some estimates has up to 100,000 fighters, integrated under its control.

Created in 2013, RSF emerged from the Popular Defence Forces – a government-backed militia known as the Janjaweed – that longtime autocratic ruler al-Bashir unleashed a decade earlier in the western region of Darfur against non-Arab rebels, where it was accused of war crimes by rights groups.

While experts have pointed to worrying rivalries between al-Burhan and Dagalo, the two men took turns speaking on Sunday in Khartoum, pleading for successful integration. Al-Burhan said his country will create a military force that will not intervene in politics and will be trusted by the Sudanese people in building a modern and democratic state.

Dagalo said he wanted "a unified army", adding the October 2021 coup that brought al-Burhan to power had "failed" because it had not brought change but rather the return of the "old regime" of al-Bashir loyalists.

Integrating the RSF and placing the military under civilian authority are central demands of civilian groups that helped overthrow al-Bashir four years ago and shared power with the military until the 2021 coup.

The December deal came after near-weekly protests since al-Burhan's October 2021 takeover, which had also triggered international aid cuts and Western sanctions, adding to the deepening political and economic troubles in one of the world's poorest countries.

The demonstrations against the military and economic woes have been met by a violent crackdown, with hundreds of activists also being rounded up under emergency laws.

The military and civilian leaders are expected to formally adopt the deal on April 6 and launch a new civilian government on April 11.

The agreement had left several sensitive issues, including security reforms and transitional justice, for further discussion.

UN experts accuse senior South Sudan officials of rights abuses (Al Jazeera)

April 3, 2023

A United Nations-backed panel of investigators have alleged in a new report that several officials in South Sudan have perpetrated serious human rights violations and should be held accountable for their crimes.

Top government and military leaders were identified on Monday in a new report by the UN Commission on Human Rights in South Sudan that details state responsibility for widespread murder, rape and sexual slavery.

The commission – which conducted a year-long investigation across six states in South Sudan, and released a partial summary of its findings in March – said none of those named in the final report had faced any accountability for their crimes.

“Over several years, our findings have consistently shown that impunity for serious crimes is a central driver of violence and misery faced by civilians in South Sudan,” Yasmin Sooka, commission chair, said.

“So we have taken the step of naming more of the individuals who warrant criminal investigation and prosecution for their role in gross human rights violations.”

The report identifies Joseph Monytil, governor of Unity State, along with Lieutenant General Thoi Chany Reat of the South Sudan People's Defence Forces, in relation to state-sanctioned killings in Mayom County in August 2022.

Four captured rebel officers were summarily executed by government troops in killings that were captured on video and shared widely. Three were killed by firing squad and a fourth was burned alive in a hut.

The report also names Gordon Koang, the county commissioner of Koch, who was accused of leading horrific attacks on civilians in neighbouring Leer County between February and April 2022.

Other top-ranking officials in Warrap, Upper Nile, Jonglei and the Equatoria states were identified as warranting further scrutiny or investigation for their role in various abuses.

“The Commission found that while the Government of South Sudan has announced special investigation committees into several situations, not one has led to any form of accountability,” the panel said in a statement. “Government and military personnel implicated in these serious crimes remain in office.”

The officials were not immediately available for comment, The Associated Press news agency said.

The government has accused the commission of interfering in its national affairs and rejected past findings from the three-member panel.

South Sudan achieved independence from Sudan in 2011, but collapsed into a civil war two years later that devastated the world's newest country.

Close to 400,000 people died before a peace deal was signed in 2018, but core tenets of the agreement remain unfulfilled, and the country is riven by armed violence.

A promised tribunal led by the African Union to prosecute offenders and deliver justice for victims of war crimes has never eventuated.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Official Website of the International Criminal Court
ICC Public Documents - Situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Congo President Tshisekedi brings in former VP Bemba in reshuffle ahead of election (Reuters) By Stanis Bujakera and Sonia Rolley
March 23, 2023

Democratic Republic of Congo's President Felix Tshisekedi has appointed the country's former vice president Jean-Pierre Bemba, who was detained for over 10 years for war crimes, as the country's defence minister in a sweeping government reshuffle.

His appointment was part of an overhaul of the 57 members of government, which the president's spokesperson said was "urgent and necessary", in an announcement on Congo's national television late on Thursday. No further details were given.

The reshuffle, which was more extensive than observers had predicted, came ahead of an expected presidential election on Dec. 20, in which Tshisekedi is likely to seek a second term.

"This a deeply political shuffle," said Jason Stearns, Director of the Congo Research Group and Professor at Canada's Simon Fraser University.

Tshisekedi appointed Vital Kamerhe, his former chief of staff who was released from prison in Dec. 2021 following an embezzlement conviction, as economy minister.

Nicolas Kazadi was maintained as finance minister.

The appointments bring political heavyweights into the government, strengthening Tshisekedi's coalition ahead of elections, Stearns said.

"Key positions are given to senior politicians who have large constituencies to please but little expertise in their new ministries. Kamerhe is not an economist. Bemba was a rebel but has little formal military training," he said.

Bemba, a former rebel leader was arrested in 2008 by the International Criminal Court for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by his troops in the Central African Republic between 2002 and 2003.

He was acquitted and released 10 years later after his conviction was reversed on appeal. He was however accused and convicted on lesser charges of witness tampering during the trial.

Kamerhe, an influential Congolese power broker, was sentenced to 20 years in prison in 2020 for embezzling nearly \$50 million from a presidential economic programme. He denied the charges.

His sentence was reduced to 13 years on appeal the following year, however in June 2022, a higher court overturned the judgment.

In east DR Congo, displaced Muslims celebrate bleak Ramadan (Agence France-Presse) By Alexis Hugué
March 28, 2023

A brilliant setting sun illuminates the sky above the mosque of Munigi, a small clapboard building in troubled eastern DR Congo serving Muslims displaced by the M23 conflict.

Worshippers are preparing to break their Ramadan fast in the camp, on a lava-strewn field just 10 kilometres (six miles) from the front lines.

Their circumstances -- cramped together in makeshift huts -- are far bleaker than the dazzling sunset behind them.

Some 500 Muslims live in the Munigi displaced persons' camp, where access to food and water is severely limited.

"The first ones arrived nearly a year ago," said Ali Assani Mukamba, the local imam, speaking of Muslim displaced people.

Walking through the mass of tiny huts, built hastily on the field of volcanic rock, he explains that one of the biggest problems is a lack of fresh water.

"To wash before prayer, we're sometimes forced to rub ourselves with dust or mud," Mukamba said.

As night falls, Muslim worshippers pass around a platter of rice and beans, while a pale bulb comes on to light up their mosque.

'Killed by the M23'

Abda Juma Buranga, one of the Muslim elders in the camp, said they are only able eat their iftar meal -- which breaks the fast -- because of charitable donations.

He fled his native village of Kibumba, less than 20 kilometres (12 miles) from the camp, when M23 fighters launched an attack in November.

"I lost 25 members of my family, cousins, aunts, nephews," the 65-year-old said. "They were all killed by the M23".

The Muslim community in Munigi makes up a tiny part of the huge number of people who have fled the M23 in North Kivu province.

This month, the International Organization for Migration said the crisis has displaced almost 900,000 people.

A Tutsi-led group, the M23 first came to international prominence when it briefly captured North Kivu's capital Goma in 2012 before being driven out.

The rebels took up arms again in late 2021 after years of dormancy, on claims that the government had ignored a pledge to integrate its fighters into the military.

The M23 has since captured swathes of territory in North Kivu, and is now threatening to cut off the roads leading to Goma, a trade hub of over one million people.

- 'We're suffering' -

"In 2012, I didn't flee when the M23 arrived," said Aisha Furaha, sitting on a rock in Munigi camp with her head bent low.

The M23 returned "with more brutality" during its second campaign, according to the 40-year-old woman.

The rebels had threatened to loot and kill, Furaha said, adding that she and her 10 children had fled their home under a hail of gunfire.

Now, she and her family sleep on the ground in a hut in Munigi, where she said there isn't enough room for everyone.

M23 fighters are still in position across North Kivu, and on hilltops near Goma. According to reports by independent experts for the United Nations Security Council, Rwanda is backing and equipping the rebels. Kigali denies the claim.

Abda Juma, the Muslim elder in Munigi, said he wanted the international community to force Rwandan President Paul Kagame to withdraw the M23.

"We're suffering a lot," he said.

Who are the armed groups ravaging the eastern DR Congo? (RFI) By Michael Fitzpatrick
March 31, 2023

In its statement published Wednesday, the Security Council called for "all members of armed groups [to] immediately and permanently disband, lay down their arms and release children from their ranks".

The Council focused in particular on rebels of the March 23 Movement (M23), whose attacks have increased in recent months

in North Kivu, which borders Rwanda.

But this week's quarterly report on the DRC by UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says the Allied Democratic Forces and the Cooperative for the Development of the Congo (Codeco) are also responsible for the surge in regional violence, with at least 700 civilians murdered in the first three months of this year.

M23

This Tutsi-led rebel group has seized swathes of territory and advanced close to the regional hub city of Goma, prompting the seven-nation East African Community to authorise the deployment in November of a military force of mostly Kenyan soldiers.

M23 rebels were supposed to leave North Kivu by the end of March, but are have been seen throughout the region.

The Congolese government, independent UN experts and several Western governments say the M23 rebels are backed by Rwanda, a claim denied by Kigali.

The Security Council this week again demanded "that all external parties immediately cease their support" for M23.

The March 23 Movement was formed at the end of the Kivu war in 2009. Under a peace deal signed on 23 March of that year, rebels of Laurent Nkunda's National Congress for the Defence of the People (CNDP) were integrated into the Congolese army.

Dissatisfied with the way in which the peace terms were administered, and refusing Kinshasa's attempts to disperse them to other parts of the DRC, the rebels mutinied, murdered their officers and took to the bush with weapons, vehicles and uniforms stolen from army stocks.

The group continues to control large swathes of North Kivu, and is probably financed by the illegal export of the region's raw materials - principally timber and minerals - to or through neighbouring Rwanda.

Allied Democratic Forces

This islamist-aligned militia was formed in Uganda in 1995 with a view to opposing then Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni.

A series of military defeats in the late 1990s forced group members out of Uganda's western Rwenzori mountains and into North Kivu, where their activities centred on the towns of Beni and Ituri.

With an estimated 500 active fighters, the group pledged allegiance to the Islamic State armed group in October 2017 and was listed as a terrorist organisation by the US administration.

Money, weapons and strategic advice for the ADF are believed to come from islamist organisations in Somalia. The group is locally financed by the illegal export of coffee, timber and gold.

Codeco

The group was formed as an agricultural cooperative in the 1970s, before morphing in the late 1990s into an armed militia mainly fighting to defend Lendu people in Ituri and North Kivu.

Several of the militias that claim Codeco affiliation stand accused of massacres and war crimes by UN officials.

Today the group is described variously as an armed political-religious sect, an association of Lendu militias, and a political-military sect.

They are active in the region of Ituri and are suspected of being involved in several massacres and armed confrontations with the Congolese army.

A neglected human disaster

Bintou Keita, the head of the UN mission in DRC, told the Security Council meeting on Wednesday that the country's "already immense" humanitarian needs continue to increase.

"This humanitarian crisis remains one of the most neglected in the world," she said, calling for funding of two billion euros promised under the UN's 2023 humanitarian plan for the DRC.

At least 2,100 schools have shut their doors in North Kivu and Ituri provinces since January due to conflict, according to the UN's children's agency, which it said has affected some 750,000 children.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

WEST AFRICA

Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)

**Official Website of the International Criminal Court
ICC Public Documents - Situation in the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire**

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Lake Chad Region – Chad, Nigeria, Niger, and Cameroon

Hunger and Terrorism: The Humanitarian Crisis in the Lake Chad Basin Region (European Eye on Radicalization) By Ana Aguilera

March 23, 2023

Hunger and terrorism are wreaking havoc in the Lake Chad Basin region, causing a severe humanitarian crisis. Millions of people are in dire need of assistance, with their livelihoods destroyed and access to basic necessities cut off by the violence and instability caused by terrorist groups like Boko Haram and the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP).

The United Nations (UN) and its partners have been working tirelessly to address the impact of terrorism in the Lake Chad Basin region, providing humanitarian assistance, supporting development initiatives, and working with governments to promote stability and security. However, despite these efforts, the humanitarian crisis in the region persists.

The Impact of Terrorism on Food Security

Terrorist groups like Boko Haram and ISWAP have disrupted food production and trade, causing food prices to soar and leaving millions of people without access to basic necessities. These armed groups have also attacked farmers, destroyed crops, and burned down markets, leading to significant crop losses and a decline in agricultural productivity.

In the state of Borno, Boko Haram is believed to have stalled the cultivation of over 400 hectares of wheat in the area, as well as in other states in the northeastern part of Nigeria. In Niger, at least 11 local farmers were shot dead by elements of ISWAP in September 2022, amidst accusations of information leaking about the terrorists' hideouts. Additionally, the conflict has led to the displacement of millions of people, fueling food insecurity and prompting the need to rely on illicit economies for survival, which further exacerbates the violence cycle.

Terrorism also disrupts local economies, leading to the loss of livelihoods for farmers, traders, and other food producers. This leads to a reduction in the diversity and resilience of local food systems, making them more vulnerable to shocks such as droughts and floods.

The situation in the Lake Chad Basin region is especially critical, with the United Nations warning of a risk of famine for millions of people in the region. This has put humanitarian agencies on the front line in providing emergency food assistance, nutritional support, and livelihood opportunities to those in need. Humanitarian agencies have been working tirelessly to support affected communities, but their efforts have been hampered by funding shortfalls, security challenges, and limited access to conflict-affected areas. Despite these challenges, they continue to provide life-saving assistance to millions of people in the region.

The situation is particularly dire in northeastern Nigeria, where Boko Haram has been most active. In Borno state, the epicenter of the crisis, over 4 million people are in need of food assistance, and over 320,000 children are suffering from severe acute malnutrition.

Humanitarian Response

The international response to the crisis in the Lake Chad Basin region has been a critical component of the humanitarian effort. The UN has been working with its partners to coordinate the delivery of life-saving assistance to millions of people affected by the crisis.

One of the key initiatives undertaken by the UN has been the establishment of the Lake Chad Basin Commission (LCBC), which brings together the affected countries of Chad, Cameroon, Niger, and Nigeria to promote regional cooperation and coordinate a joint response to the crisis.

The LCBC has been working to improve cross-border coordination, promote peace and security, and support livelihoods and economic development in the affected communities. Other initiatives, such as the 2017 Lake Chad Basin Strategic Action Programme, are aimed at curbing the growing influence of environmental and climate change and inappropriate practices.

Root Causes

The UN has also been working to address the root causes of the crisis through long-term investments in agriculture and rural development, conflict resolution, and strengthening social protection systems. For example, the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) has been supporting farmers to improve agricultural productivity, while the World Food Programme (WFP) has been providing food assistance to millions of people in the region. On its part, the European Union (EU) has pledged more than €100 million in humanitarian funding for Africa's Lake Chad region, allocating a great amount of EU aid to the region.

Despite advocacy efforts by humanitarian agencies, funding appeals often fall short of their targets, and access to affected communities is restricted by the ongoing violence and instability caused by terrorism. The COVID-19 pandemic and the irruption of the war in Ukraine has further exacerbated these challenges, with restrictions on movement and disruptions to supply chains and markets.

As part of its response, the UN has also been working to address the protection needs of affected populations — particularly women and children who are often the most vulnerable in crisis situations. By engaging with local partners, the UN has been able to provide protection services, including psychosocial support, and promote women's and children's rights in the affected communities.

Mounting Challenges

Despite the efforts of the UN and its partners, the humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin region persists. Ongoing violence and instability caused by terrorism makes it difficult for humanitarian actors to access those needing assistance. Additionally, cross-cutting threats such as climate change, have made it even more challenging to provide assistance, with restrictions on movement and disruptions to supply chains and markets.

In this situation of instability, institutional areas are intertwined with the humanitarian context. Many regional governments and institutions have limited capacity to address the food crisis effectively. This includes limited technical expertise, weak regulatory frameworks, and inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems, which can make it difficult to implement effective policies and programs.

Weak governance in the Lake Chad Basin also leads to corruption, lack of accountability, and limited transparency, which tend to undermine efforts to address food insecurity. The 2016 report of the World Food Programme confirmed that corruption and political neglect to provide basic social services played a key role in social unrest and food insecurity.

The humanitarian crisis in the Lake Chad Basin region is a stark reminder of the impact of terrorism on food security and the need for a coordinated response from the international community. The UN and its partners have been working to address the impact of terrorism on food security, providing humanitarian assistance, supporting development initiatives, and working with governments to promote stability and security.

However, the ongoing violence and instability caused by terrorism, as well as the challenges posed by cross-cutting threats, continue to pose significant challenges to these efforts.

Troops raid 6 Boko Haram camps, kill terrorists in Borno (The Cable) By Samad Uthman
March 26, 2023

Troops of the 21 task force brigade, Operation Hadin Kai, and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) have reportedly killed an unconfirmed number of Boko Haram fighters in Borno.

Zagazola Makama, a publication focused on the Lake Chad region, reports that the terrorists were killed following a raid on six camps belonging to the group on Saturday.

Zagazola quoted a source in the military as saying that the troops “successfully” cleared the terrorists’ hideouts in Bula Agaida, Bula Yaga, Bula Lambai, Kuluri, Bula Umar, and New Churchur in Bama LGA of the state.

The publication said the troops recovered a gun truck from the terrorists during the onslaught.

“The troops discovered and destroyed a large Boko Haram camp between Bula Agaida and Bula Yaga. The troops also discovered and destroyed the terrorist market,” the source told Zagazola.

“Zagazola understands that during the fighting patrol to clear the general areas, the troops encountered some terrorists, eliminated them, and recovered a Toyota Hilux gun truck.

“The sources confirmed that most of the terrorists had deserted their camps while troops destroyed those that were rebuilt.”

TheCable had earlier reported how the troops of Operation Hadin Kai and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) killed 41 fighters — including Abu Zahra, a top commander — of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in Dikwa LGA of Borno.

Zagazola said the operation led by Shaibu Waidi, the general officer commanding the 7 division, was in response to attacks by ISWAP on Mukdolo village.

Troops repel ISWAP attack on military base in Borno, kill 10 insurgents (The Cable) By Samad Uthman
March 27, 2023

Troops of Operation Hadin Kai have repelled an attack by the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) on a military base in Borno state.

According to Zagazola Makama, a publication focused on the Lake Chad region, the terrorists were said to have invaded Kunnari, a village near Buratai town, at about 3am on Monday.

The publication said the terrorists attempted to invade the military base but they were met with stiff resistance from the troops.

“The ISWAP fighters came in trucks and motorcycles, shooting sporadically but a swift response from the troops put them in disarray,” the publication quoted a military source as saying.

The source added that the troops eventually overpowered the ISWAP fighters.

Eight of the fighters were said to have been killed while others fled from the scene.

“The gallant troops chased the terrorists in their escape route and intercepted two other terrorists who were trying to fix their motorcycle after it broke down and gun them down,” the publication said.

However, a soldier was said to have been injured in the course of the operation.

TheCable had earlier reported how the troops of Operation Hadin Kai and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) killed 41 fighters — including Abu Zahra, a top commander — of the Islamic State West Africa Province (ISWAP) in Dikwa LGA of Borno.

The operation led by Shaibu Waidi, the general officer commanding the 7 division, was in response to attacks by ISWAP on Mukdolo village.

ISWAP Commander, Abu Muhammed, executes deputy over military attack on hideout (Vanguard)
By Ndahi Marama
March 27, 2023

A Commander of the Islamic State of the West African Province (ISWAP), Abu

Muhammed, has executed his immediate deputy, Abu Darda, for enabling military operation into their camp in Mukdolo and Bone villages which led to the killing of 41 fighters including Abu-Zahra Munzir.

This is even as Troops of Joint Task Force Operation Hadin Kai have successfully repelled an ISWAP attack on a military formation in the volatile northeast of Kunnari near Burutai town in Biu Local Government Area, Borno State.

Burutai town is the home base of the former Chief of Army Staff, Retired Lieutenant General Tukur Yusuf Buratai.

In the repelled attack, about 10 terrorists were eliminated. Sources have said.

The terrorists were said to have stormed the town at about 3 am, Monday, March 27, 2023, and attempted an attack on the military base.

It was gathered that Abu Darda was eliminated by the angry Commander in the presence of other fighters in Kajeri Dogumba village in Mafa Local Government Area of Borno State.

Intelligence sources also told Zagazola Makama, a Counter-Insurgency Expert and Security Analyst in the Lake Chad region that "Abu Muhammed accused Abu Darda of leading the failed attacks of March 19th, in Mafa which resulted in the killing of scores of the terrorists and capturing of two of their gun trucks.

The Commander said they had only three trucks but Darda's failure led to their capture by the military, noting that he couldn't watch his back as the military traced his footsteps to attack them in their camp while they were sleeping.

The Commander further said he was particularly pained because the military killed scores of his fighters and burnt his foodstuff and some newly acquired furniture meant for his wedding which was by the corner.

The Commander who is currently converging his fighters at Kajeri Dogumba, Bula Yagana Aliye in Mafa Local Government Area of Borno State, vowed to revenge the killing of his fighters.

Recall that Troops of the Nigerian Army under the auspices of Operation Hadin Kai, stormed the hideout of the ISWAP terrorist group in Dikwa Local Govt of Borno State, killing 41 of the terrorists including a Commander, Abu Zahra.

In another development, Troops of Joint Task Force Operation Hadin Kai successfully repelled the ISWAP attack on a military formation in the volatile northeast of Kunnari near Burutai town in Biu Local Government Area, Borno State.

Sources said, "the terrorists were said to have stormed the town at about 3 am, Monday, March 27, 2023, and attempted an attack on the military base."

An Intelligence source told Zagazola Makama, that the ISWAP came in trucks and motorcycles, shooting sporadically but a swift response from the troops put them in disarray.

He said the troops later overwhelmed the terrorists in a gunbattle and eliminated eight of them while others fled the scene.

"The gallant troops further chased the terrorists in their escape route and intercepted two other terrorists who were trying to fix their motorcycle after it broke down and gun them down. One soldier was however injured in the course of operation." Said a reliable Source.

Troops kill ISWAP commander, 41 other fighters in Borno (The Guardian) By Njadvara Musa
March 28, 2023

Troops of Operation Hadin Kai (OPHK), in collaboration with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF), have neutralised the Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP) Commander, Abu Zahra, in Dikwa-Ngala axis of Borno State.

The coordinated operations, led by General Officer Commanding (GOC) 7 Division of the Nigerian Army and Commander Sector 1, Maj.-Gen. Shaibu Waidi, eliminated the Commander and other terrorists in a silent intelligence-led midnight offensive at Mukdolo hideout.

A counter-insurgency expert in the Lake Chad region, Zagazola Makama, disclosed yesterday in Maiduguri that in a deadly special operation, the commander was eliminated by the ground troops.

Makama said that the coordinated raid followed recent attacks carried out by the Islamist sect that led to the killing of 36 fishermen in Mukdolo Village in Ngala Local Council.

Meanwhile, the commander was reported to have earlier executed his deputy in the presence of other fighters in Kajeri Dogumba village in the Mafa Local Council of Borno State.

Counter-insurgency expert, Makama Zagazola, disclosed that Muhammed accused Darda of leading the failed attack, which led to their loss, and seizure of their gun trucks by the military.

According to the military source, the commander said he was particularly pained because the military killed scores of his fighters, burnt his foodstuff and some newly-acquired furniture meant for his wedding soon.

The source said the commander had, however, vowed to mobilise his fighters at Kajeri Dogumba and Bula Yagana Aliye in Mafa Local Council of the state. "The armed terrorists, headed by Abu Darda and Abu Muhammed, also stormed Mafa town on March 19, 2023.

"But the attack was thwarted by the troops, resulting in the killing of scores of the terrorists and recovery of two of gun trucks.

"Consequently, upon the major offensive, military equipment, including a gun, three motorcycles and several other weapons were recovered from the terrorists' hideouts," the source stated.

Iswap leader executes deputy after Nigeria army kills 41 militants (The East African) By Mohammed Momoh
March 29, 2023

Furious over a Nigerian military raid that killed 41 fighters on March 19, Islamic State West African Province (Iswap) commander has executed his deputy for failing to stop the attack.

Deputy Iswap commander Abu Darda was on Monday executed by his boss Abu Muhammed, in the presence of other fighters in Kajeri Dogumba village in Mafa Local Government Area (LGA) of Northeast Borno State.

Abu Muhammed said he was mostly hurt because the Nigerian forces killed scores of his fighters, burnt foodstuffs and some newly acquired furniture meant for his wedding. He was also enraged by the attack that led to the seizure of their only three gun trucks.

'Failed attacks' Mr Zagazola Makama, a counter-insurgency expert and security analyst covering insurgency in the Lake Chad region of northeast Borno state, said that the Iswap commander had also accused his deputy of leading failed attacks of March 19 in Mafa, which resulted in the killing of scores of the terrorists and capturing of two of their gun trucks.

He said that Abu Darda was killed by the angry commander in the presence of other fighters in Kajeri Dogumba village in Mafa Local Government Area of Borno State.

Mr Makama reported that the said was furious because the only three gun trucks they had were taken by the military which he blamed on the failure of Darda to execute attacks.

He said the Iswap commander said that his executed deputy was unable to watch his boss's back as the military traced his footsteps to attack them in their camp while they were sleeping.

Insurgents killed Nigerian troops attacked an Iswap hideout in Mukdolo in Dikwa LGA of Borno State, killing 41 insurgents together with one of their their commander, Abu Zahra, as many injured extremists fled during the attack.

The troops carried out the attack on the platform of Operation Hadin Kai in collaboration with the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) and were coordinated by Maj- Gen Shaibu Waidi.

The raid followed attacks by the Iswap terrorists on March 10 that led to the death of 36 fishermen in Gupdilo.

The Nigerian army on March 25 also killed Boko Haram fighters during a raid on six militia camps on the fringes of Sambisa Forest. In addition, the troops discovered and destroyed a large cache of arms belonging to Boko Haram. Ex-militias apologise Meanwhile, former militias who have completed a deradicalisation programme have begged Nigerians for forgiveness for attempting to destabilise the country.

The 594 former insurgents completed a six-month deradicalisation, rehabilitation and reintegration (DRR) programme in Kwami LGA of Northeast Gombe State.

They appealed for forgiveness during their graduation which took place at Malam Sidi camp which is run by the Nigerian army under Operation Safe Corridor.

“We apologise to Nigerians, our state governments, communities as well as everyone seated here and we are not going back to this atrocities,” said Muhammad Abba who spoke on behalf of the former militia members.

Abba further gave the assurance that they would remain loyal and faithful to Nigeria as well as work for peace and stability.

According to the camp commandant, Col Uche Nnabuihe, three of the former insurgents are from Niger Republic and one is from Chad.

80,000 militias surrenders The Nigerian army reported that more than 80,000 extremists have so far surrendered since the insurgency started in 2009.

“Between July 2021 and May 2022, 54,000 extremists and their families surrendered,” Nigeria’s Chief of Defence Staff Lt-Gen Lucky Irabor said in a report at the 7th Founders’ Day of the Edo State University.

The report titled “National Defence Policy and Transitional Justice Approach in the War Against Insurgency in Nigeria”, said that 1,543 former Boko Haram members graduated from the Mallam Sidi camp in Gombe between 2016 and 2022.

How Buhari Government Failed To Protect Nigerian Civilians From Armed Terror Groups, Criminal Security Officials –Amnesty International Report (Sahara Reporters)

March 30, 2023

Amnesty International has stated in its 2022 report that President Muhammadu Buhari-led government failed to protect Nigerians from armed terror groups.

The report said this led to the killing, injuring and displacement of thousands of civilians across the country by Boko Haram insurgents, bandits, Islamic State of West African Province (ISWAP), unknown gunmen and even security officers.

The report also noted that the Nigerian government consistently failed to punish and hold security officials accountable for crimes committed against civilians, adding that Nigerian security forces consistently violated human rights in the context of military operations.

According to Amnesty International, Boko Haram, ISWAP and unknown gunmen reportedly killed at least 6,907 people, abducted 6,157 and forcibly internally displaced at least 2,000 within the period under review.

It stated that there are still more than 2.4 million internally displaced people in the Northeastern region of the country, noting that in an attempt to resettle all internally displaced people living in Maiduguri, the Borno state government closed four camps in July 2022 and resettled 11,000 households but most of the resettled people lack sufficient food and access to basic amenities.

The report said, “Attacks by Boko Haram, which had been predominantly in the north-east, spread to some states in north-central and north-western Nigeria during the year. Attacks by Boko Haram directed against civilians, such as those targeting villagers, farming communities and highway and train passengers, amounted to war crimes.

“Of the hundreds of schoolchildren abducted by Boko Haram in previous years, 110 girls remained in captivity at the end of the year.”

On the operation of Nigeria’s security officials and the government’s failure to hold them accountable for crimes against civilians, the Amnesty International report stated, “Security forces consistently violated human rights in the context of military operations conducted against Boko Haram in north-eastern Nigeria.

“In December, Reuters reported that the Nigerian military had conducted a secret forced abortion programme in the north-east since 2013, ending at least 10,000 pregnancies without the consent or prior knowledge of the women and girls concerned, which could amount to war crimes and a crime against humanity.

“The Nigerian authorities consistently failed to hold security officials accountable for crimes committed against civilians.”

The report further noted that Nigerian security officials engaged in several torture and ill-treatments, adding that security forces used excessive force to disperse peaceful protests and assemblies.

It said, “Nigerian security forces killed at least 122 people in response to increasing violence and killings of their officers in south-eastern Nigeria. On 17 July, at least seven people were extrajudicially executed by state-sponsored Ebubeagu paramilitary agents in the town of Awo-Omamma, Imo State.”

“Torture and other ill-treatment remained pervasive within the criminal justice system. At least 21 #EndSARS protesters were tortured while in detention.

“At the Criminal Investigation Department, Umuahia, and in other police facilities, police officers tortured the arrested protesters by tying their hands to iron bars and flogging their ankles with rods. Victims reported to Amnesty International that at least two protesters were tortured to death.” The report added.

Troops repel another ISWAP attack on military base in Borno – 2nd incident in two days (The Cable) By Samad Uthman

March 30, 2023

The troops of the Nigerian army have repelled another terrorist attack on a military base in Borno.

Zagazola Makama, a counter-insurgency publication focused on the Lake Chad region, reports that the attack – coordinated by one Abou Mubammed, an ISWAP commander – was targeted at the military asset in Ajiri, Mafa LGA of Borno on Wednesday.

The publication said the “failed attack” was in retaliation to the killing of 41 fighters – including a commander – of ISWAP in Mukdolo on Sunday by the troops of Operation Hadin Kai and the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF).

Prior to the attack, Zagazola Makama said ISWAP fighters had vowed in a meeting to avenge the mass killings of their members by the troops.

“The terrorists were said to have stormed the town on Wednesday night, March 29, 2023, and attempted an attack on the military base which resulted in a heavy gun battle with the troops,” the publication said.

“The troops later overwhelmed the terrorists in a gun battle and successfully repelled the attack while inflicting serious fatalities on the overpowered fighters.”

The publication said the troops also repelled an ambush set for the soldiers after the failed attack.

“The failed ambush broke the last straw on the back of the ISWAP fighters, which made them flee,” Zagazola said.

A member of CJTF was injured during the gun duel.

The terrorist attack on Wednesday was the second this week.

On Monday, troops of Operation Hadin Kai repelled an attack on Kunnari, a village in Buratai town, housing a military base.

ISWAP Terrorists Launch Midnight Attack On Nigerian Police Station In Borno State (Sahara Reporters)

April 1, 2023

Troops of the Nigerian Army and police operatives have repelled an attack launched on a police station at Jakana, Kaga Local Government of Borno State by the Islamic State of West African Province, (ISWAP) terrorists.

According to counter-insurgency expert and security analyst in the Lake Chad region, Zagaza Makama, the attack on the police station began at about 2:30a.m, when the terrorists mounted their General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMG), and began shooting sporadically at the police division.

Sources said that the police personnel stationed at the station in collaboration with troops of the Nigerian Army deployed to protect the community, swiftly responded to the attack, leading to a heavy gun duel that lasted for about 30 minutes.

It was reported that troops of the 29 Task Force Brigade Fighting Patrol were also deployed to the scene to assist the police, which made it possible to overwhelm the terrorists and forced them to flee.

However, it was gathered that no casualty was recorded in the incident as of the time of reporting.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Mali

[[back to contents](#)]

Liberia

Liberia: U.S. Trials of Two Alleged Top Warlords Delayed (allAfrica) By Anthony Stephens

March 28, 2023

The US trials of two alleged notorious Liberian warlords, scheduled for May and July, will be delayed until late this year at the earliest.

Moses Wright, a former Brigadier General of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) is currently scheduled to go on trial in the Eastern District of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania in July but the trial is likely to be delayed according to prosecutors. The trial of Laye Sekou Camara, alias "K-1" or "Dragon Master", of the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), was scheduled to be in the same court in May but has now been delayed until November 27.

Following from the successful convictions of Mohammed Jabbateh and Jucontee Thomas Woewiyu for criminal immigration fraud the Pennsylvania District Attorney's office is pursuing the same charges against Wright and Camara. Assistant U.S. Attorney L.C. Wright will again lead the prosecution team. Prosecutors alleged that in separate immigration applications the two concealed information about their roles in Liberia's two civil wars.

In August 2016 "Defendant Moses Slander Wright knowingly made a false statement under oath in a proceeding, and matter relating to naturalization, citizenship, and registry of aliens," according to the indictment. The indictment said Wright lied when he answered "No" to the question: "During your time as Commanding General, did you ever witness or order any troops to engage in acts of persecution or murder?" Prosecutors alleged he made that statement knowing that he had committed "murder, assault, false arrest, and false imprisonment, and aiding and abetting murder, assault, false arrest, and false imprisonment."

The indictment alleged Wright held many positions in Liberia's army, including commander, master sergeant and brigadier general and was among army soldiers who were loyal to Samuel Doe, the Liberian President at the time. Wright was credited with helping foil a coup by General Thomas Quiwonkpa against Doe in 1985. After the failed coup, army soldiers loyal to Doe "captured and executed General Quiwonkpa and hundreds of Gio and Mano soldiers and carried out reprisal attacks that killed hundreds of Gio and Mano civilians," according to the indictment. Five years before that, Doe had successfully overthrown, William R. Tolbert, the elected President in a coup.

Wright, 70, faces a maximum sentence of 165 years in prison and a \$US7 million fine if convicted - the largest faced by any defendant facing immigration fraud charges in the United States.

Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission found Wright, Moses Thomas, James Chelly and George Dweh, who later became Speaker of Liberia's interim Assembly between 2003-2006, had killed "27 Gio and Mano family members in a massacre in June 1990 on Doe's orders." Dweh, an executive of the Movement for Peace and Democracy rebel group, died in April 2020 without being held to account for this alleged role in the killings and other human rights violations during Liberia's second civil war. In August 2022, a Philadelphia Court ordered Thomas, a top commander of Doe's Special Anti-terrorist Unit (SATU), to pay \$US84m to victims of the 1990 St. Peter's Lutheran Church massacre in which 600 men, women, and children were slaughtered. The Court had found Thomas liable for the killings in September 2021. Thomas fled to Liberia where the government has not pursued justice for crimes committed in the civil wars. The US-based Center for Justice and Accountability and the Liberian human rights organization, Global Justice and Research Project (GJRP) sued the government in the ECOWAS Community Court of Justice for "dereliction of duty" for not prosecuting Thomas for the killings.

Camara, a top general for the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), was also infamously called the "More Mortar Man" by his fellow soldiers and civilians, because he was known for his ruthless use of the bomb propelling weapon. In August 2003 LURD's assault on Monrovia helped to force Taylor to resign, ending the conflict. LURD committed 12 per cent of all civil war atrocities reported to Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The numbers are second only

to Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia which committed 39 per cent of reported atrocities. The report did not mention Camara but TRC commissioners have stressed that their report did not include every crime committed during the wars.

In Camara's 26-count indictment prosecutors say he was untruthful about his alleged role in the war in a visa interview with U.S. State Department personnel in Dakar, Senegal in 2012. The indictment quoted a US Country report from 2003 as saying that Camara "was in hiding after he allegedly killed a fellow LURD General known as Black Marine."

Camara will be the first commander of LURD to face trial. Other defendants have been with the AFL, Ulimo and NPFL. Members of LURD and MODEL have been charged in the United Kingdom.

Liberia has not legislated a war crimes court to prosecute alleged perpetrators of its civil wars, in which an estimated 250,000 people were killed. Because of that prosecutors in the US and Europe have decided not to deport accused perpetrators there but to instead use the principle of "universal jurisdiction" which holds that crimes committed "against humanity" can be tried anywhere.

Liberia: Another Ex-Soldier Alleges Former RUF Commander, Gibril Massaquoi Killed Civilians in Monrovia for "Looting" (FrontPageAfrica) By Evelyn Kpadeh Seagbeh

March 30, 2023

A witness, claiming to be a former Liberian army soldier, has accused the Sierra Leonean man facing charges for alleged gross human rights violations in Liberia of ordering massacre at Waterside in Monrovia.

"Soldier 15," who like all other witnesses, cannot be named for protection from reprisal, told Finland's Turku Court of Appeals that the civilians had gone allegedly to loot from a store when Gibril Massaquoi ordered their killings.

But he was quick to admit that he not physically present when the alleged incident happened.

"When I got there, that morning I saw 6 dead bodies," said Soldier 15. "So, when we asked the civilians who killed the people, they said it was Gibril and his people and it was that same morning Salami died on the bridge."

"So, I called him (Gibril) and asked him, and he told me it is because the people were looting," he said.

The Court has heard a similar testimony from many witnesses about the alleged killings in the area, which are at the heart of this appeal hearing. "Angel Gabriel," an infamous nickname many witnesses have alleged Massaquoi used before killing civilians or fellow soldiers, is also at issue in these proceedings. But, as they did in the District Court, which, nearly a year ago, acquitted Massaquoi, a former commander of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF), of all charges, including murder, rape, and torture because they were not proven by prosecutors "beyond a reasonable doubt," Massaquoi's lawyers are arguing on appeal that the witnesses are talking about a different person. They are also arguing that he was providing information to the then-UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone at the time witnesses have alleged he committed the crimes. But Wednesday's witness insisted he fought alongside Massaquoi during the years in dispute.

"Yes, I know Gibril Massaquoi because, we all used to fight together from 2001 to 2002 for [Charles] Taylor, he said. "He [Massaquoi] was with the RUF."

Soldier 15 alleged he was a part of the Liberian government troops that fought alongside the RUF soldiers to push back rebels from the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy during those years, and also in 2003.

He Massaquoi and his RUF fighters had operated in parts of Lofa County, before moving to Monrovia. The ex-Liberian soldier said in Monrovia, the RUF soldiers were based at Waterside.

The former government fighter also confirmed seeing other two civilians' corpses at Water Street intersection that same day totaling eight.

He also said he was part of a group of former Sierra Leonean rebels that brunt people alive in Lofa County.

But "Defense 40," a defense witness, and a Sierra Leonean, denied Massaquoi's participation in the war.

He did however confirm the testimonies of other witnesses that worked as a special assistant to Foday Sankoh, the RUF leader. The witness claimed this happened in 1999 and that Massaquoi relayed Sankoh's instructions to the soldiers on the frontlines.

He said after an attack on Sankoh's home in Free Town on May 8, 2000, they all fled and he to Liberia.

The hearings continue on Thursday.

Two Defense Witnesses Say Alleged Sierra Leonean Warlord, Gibril Massaquoi Was in Liberia Early 2000 and 2001, But "with a Peace Delegation" (FrontPageAfrica) By Forgive Emma Kloh

April 3, 2023

Two defense witnesses have confirmed the accounts of other witnesses that an alleged Sierra Leonean warlord was in Liberia during its second civil war.

But "Defense 5" and "Defense 12" claimed although Gibril Massaquoi, a former commander for the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), of Sierra Leone, was here between 1999 and 2000, it was only for peace purposes, and that he did come along with Foday Sankoh, the rebel group's leader, and other top officials of the group.

"Gibril was appointed as head of the peace delegation in 2000, and the delegation traveled to Monrovia late 2000 during the rainy season," said Defense 12. "The peace process [for Sierra Leone], was signed on November 10th, 2000."

Defense 5, who like Defense 12, told Finland's Turku Court of Appeal on Friday he was an ex-RUF soldier, corroborated the testimony of his fellow witness.

"After the signing of the peace delegation in Abuja [Nigeria], in late 2000 and 2001, Gibril returned to Sierra Leone, conducting meetings with the international committee, the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF," he said.

The years are crucial to the appeal hearings before the Court of Appeal, as they were during the trial in the Pirkanmaa Court District of Tampere. Some prosecution witnesses have alleged that Massaquoi committed crimes, including locking up civilians, suspected of supporting rebels from the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), who had launched an insurgency on Charles Taylor's government in Lofa County. Taylor had sent for the RUF soldiers to beef up the strength of his forces against the insurgents, according to the witnesses. Many witnesses have also alleged that Massaquoi was at the Waterside market in Monrovia in 2002 and 2003 and killed, or ordered his soldiers to kill civilians, who were "looting" in stores. The contentious point about the last two years is that Massaquoi's lawyers are arguing that he was a "protected" witness for the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone, so it was impossible for him to have been in Liberia at that time. They've also argued he committed no crimes. And their witnesses on Friday looked to have validated the lower Court, which acquitted their client a year ago.

"Gibril was responsible to send information to all correspondents and he was responsible to process all documents relating to the RUF," Defense 12 said.

Defense 12 said after Massaquoi's appointment by Sankoh as his special assistant, members of the RUF were attacked by civilians at Sankoh's residence—an attack he said, that saw the capture of the latter. The civilians were unhappy that Sankoh had refused to sign a July 1999 peace agreement in Lome, Togo, according to the witness.

He said afterwards, Issa Sesay, a top RUF commander, became the interim leader of the group, while Gibril was appointed as head of an external delegation, tasked to form part of the peace process in Sierra Leone.

The witness said Jengab Kobeh, Abdul Swaray and Abdul Razark were the other members of the RUF delegation that came to Monrovia to meet some members of ECOWAS, who were guests of Taylor. He said ECOWAS used Taylor's influence over the RUF to convince them to a peace deal with the Sierra Leonean government and other warring factions at the time.

"They [ECOWAS leaders], did that because he [Taylor] was always accused of being part of the RUF."

The witness said after the delegation traveled to Abuja following the meeting, Massaquoi never came back to Liberia.

"He was meeting with the international committee," he said. The witness, a former RUF fighter, did however say that Sesay ordered a top RUF commander to return to Liberia with separate reinforcement forces to strengthen Taylor's troops and repel a fresh attack from LURD.

"I was with OG when we brought the men and we passed through Koindu in Sierra Leone and met them at one location call Meneykoma," said Defense 12. "It's in Liberia."

Defense 5 also claimed he did not see Massaquoi on the frontlines in Liberia. He said Eagle Kanneh, another top RUF commander, came to Liberia with a separate group of soldiers, also on Sesay's orders.

"I was in Makeni when he (Kanneh), was given that command to Eagle to clear the road from Voinjama to Foya," Defense 5 said.

But on cross examination, there was a drama, when the proceedings were halted for five minutes, because the man, who claimed to be Massaquoi's brother, could not call any of the nicknames witnesses have associated with the former RUF spokesman.

"The Finnish Police asked me the question as to whether Gibril code name was Angel and I told them something like it has taken a long time, so I told them I was going to think about it, said Defense 5. "And when I went home, I remembered his code name was Gaffa and not Angel."

Another point of contention was the length of time Massaquoi travelled between Liberia and Sierra Leone. The witness couldn't give a clear answer.

"I cannot remember, but he used to go and come till we disarmed."

The hearings continue on Monday, the start of their final week. The proceedings will end on Tuesday. The Court is expected to return to Liberia in May to listen to testimonies from mainly defense witnesses, who will have to travel to Liberia. In what legal experts and justice advocates see as a bizarre move, the Sierra Leonean government, which had initially accepted the District Court's request to hear witnesses there under a "mutual legal assistance," did not approve Appeal Court's request to do likewise. Sierra Leone, unlike Liberia, has openly embraced accountability for past crimes, with the prosecutions of Taylor and other RUF leaders for their roles in the Sierra Leonean civil war.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

EAST AFRICA

Uganda

**Official Website of the International Criminal Court
ICC Public Documents - Situation in Uganda**

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Kenya

**Official Website of the International Criminal Court
ICC Public Documents - Situation in the Republic of Kenya**

Human Rights Commission Probes Abuses Of Protests In Kenya (Voice of Nigeria)

March 21, 2023

The government-funded Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, KNCHR has said it is documenting allegations of human rights violations committed during the Monday demonstration.

In a statement, the commission called on the government's police watchdog to investigate reports of vandalism, arrests, injuries, and use of live fire by police officers.

"Police officers should be able to isolate and arrest violent protesters who are in breach of peace and at the same time protect those who are innocent during the demonstrations," the Commission said. The Commission further affirms that any human rights violation or abuse in the context of these demonstrations must be investigated promptly, thoroughly, and impartially.

The Commission warned demonstrators against taking advantage of the protests to destroy property, harm others and loot

saying it could lead to criminal offences.

Report says the protests against the high cost of living and alleged electoral malpractices turned violent in several opposition strongholds, including parts of Nairobi and the country's west.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Rwanda (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda)

Official Website of the ICTR

Rwanda: Kabuga is Not Fit to Stand Trial - Forensic Psychiatrist (All Africa) By Hudson Kuteesa
March 23, 2023

Gillian Mezey, a professor of forensic psychiatry at St George's University Hospitals in the UK, has said that Felicien Kabuga is not fit to plead, understand evidence and meaningfully participate in a court hearing.

Mezey is one of the medics that were tasked with examining Kabuga's health and come up with independent medical reports regarding his fitness to stand trial, in order to guide the court's decision on whether to continue with the trial or not.

Speaking to the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals (UNIRMCT) in The Hague, Mezey said Kabuga's ability to understand information and to express himself seemed very limited, very stilted and constricted in terms of his vocabulary and how he expressed himself.

The suspect is diagnosed with two types of dementia: Vascular and Alzheimer's, according to the medics.

"The Alzheimer's degenerative decline is progressive and I think there is very little at this stage that can be done to halt its progression or modify it. The vascular cognitive degeneration, I think, has been slowed and managed as effectively as possible, for example by prescription of anti-hypertensive medication and by constant monitoring of his medical condition," Mezey said.

When Emmanuel Altit, one of Kabuga's lawyers asked Mezey whether it would be possible to have a meaningful discussion with the suspect, she responded:

"If you took him by the general conversation about the weather or what he did today, and the language is kept very simple, and the sentences are kept short, then there can be some kind of interchange."

However, she noted that Kabuga would not have more complex conversations.

"It comes back to what I was being asked to assess in the first place - his fitness to plead really, his ability to follow the proceedings in court, to understand the evidence, to give evidence on his behalf and to meaningfully participate in the court hearing. I am clear that he would be unable to do that given his current level of cognitive functioning," Mezey said.

Kabuga, 89, was a businessman before and during the genocide. He is charged with seven counts including: genocide, complicity in genocide, direct and public incitement to commit genocide, attempt to commit genocide and conspiracy to commit genocide.

Other charges include persecution and extermination - both as crimes against humanity.

The court hearing is set to continue on March 29 as the judges hear more about the suspect's health.

Man who inspired 'Hotel Rwanda' gets terrorism charges commuted, will return to U.S. (Global News) By Cara Anna and Ignatius Ssuuna
March 24, 2023

Rwanda's government has commuted the 25-year sentence of Paul Rusesabagina, who inspired the film "Hotel Rwanda" for saving hundreds of countrymen from

genocide but was convicted of terrorism offenses years later in a widely criticized trial.

Government spokeswoman Yolande Makolo told The Associated Press on Friday that the presidential order was issued after a request for clemency on behalf of Rusesabagina, a 68-year-old U.S. resident and Belgian citizen. Senior U.S. officials said Rusesabagina arrived late Friday at the home of the Qatari ambassador in the Rwandan capital of Kigali and was expected to leave the country in the coming days.

U.S. President Joe Biden hailed the news, saying, “Paul’s family is eager to welcome him back to the United States, and I share their joy at today’s good news.” He thanked the governments of Rwanda and Qatar, as well as U.S. government officials who worked “to achieve today’s happy outcome.”

Nineteen others also had their sentences commuted. Under Rwandan law, commutation doesn’t “extinguish” the conviction, Makolo added.

“Rwanda notes the constructive role of the U.S. government in creating conditions for dialogue on this issue, as well as the facilitation provided by the state of Qatar,” she said. President Paul Kagame earlier this month said discussions were under way on resolving the issue.

Qatar foreign ministry spokesman Majid Al-Ansari said in a statement that “the procedure for (Rusesabagina’s) transfer to the state of Qatar is under way and he will then head to the United States of America. This issue was discussed during meetings that brought together Qatari and Rwandan officials at the highest levels.”

The senior American officials, who briefed reporters on condition of anonymity under U.S. government ground rules, declined to comment on Rusesabagina’s current health but said they had made medical and psychological care available.

The case had been described by the U.S. and others as unfair. Rusesabagina disappeared in 2020 during a visit to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates and appeared days later in Rwanda in handcuffs. His family alleged he was kidnapped and taken to Rwanda against his will to stand trial.

He was convicted on eight charges including membership in a terrorist group, murder and abduction. But the circumstances surrounding his arrest, his limited access to an independent legal team and his reported worsening health drew international concern.

One senior U.S. official said the White House’s goal was to shift from Washington denouncing the case — and Kigali defending its legal system in response — toward a “constructive sequence to work our way mutually, collectively, out of the predicament we found ourselves in.”

As part of the effort, Biden’s national security adviser, Jake Sullivan, had multiple phone calls with an unnamed close adviser to Kagame, the official said.

Rusesabagina has asserted that his arrest was in response to his criticism of Kagame over alleged human rights abuses. Kagame’s government has repeatedly denied targeting dissenting voices with arrests and extrajudicial killings.

In a signed letter to Kagame dated Oct. 14 and posted on the justice ministry’s website, Rusesabagina wrote that “if I am granted a pardon and released, I understand fully that I will spend the remainder of my days in the United States in quiet reflection. I can assure you through this letter that I hold no personal or political ambitions otherwise. I will leave questions regarding Rwandan politics behind me.”

Rusesabagina was credited with sheltering more than 1,000 ethnic Tutsis at the hotel he managed during Rwanda’s 1994 genocide in which over 800,000 Tutsis and Hutus who tried to protect them were killed. He received the U.S. Presidential Medal of Freedom for his efforts.

He became a public critic of Kagame and left Rwanda in 1996, first living in Belgium and then the U.S.

Human Rights Watch said he had been “forcibly disappeared” and taken to Rwanda. But the court there ruled he wasn’t kidnapped when he was tricked into boarding a chartered flight. Rwanda’s government asserted that Rusesabagina had been going to Burundi to coordinate with armed groups based there and in Congo.

Rusesabagina was accused of supporting the armed wing of his opposition political platform, the Rwandan Movement for Democratic Change. The armed group claimed some responsibility for attacks in 2018 and 2019 in southern Rwanda in which nine Rwandans died.

Rusesabagina testified at trial that he helped to form the armed group to assist refugees but said he never supported violence

— and sought to distance himself from its deadly attacks.

Rusesabagina also has said he was gagged and tortured before he was jailed, but Rwandan authorities denied that. His attorney, Felix Rudakemwa, asserted that Rusesabagina's legal papers were confiscated by prison authorities.

After his sentence, Belgium's then-foreign minister, Sophie Wilmes, said that "it must be concluded that Mr. Rusesabagina has not been given a fair and equitable trial."

Last year, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Kagame in Rwanda and discussed the case. "We still have conviction that the trial wasn't fair," Blinken told journalists.

"It is a relief to know that Paul is rejoining his family, and the U.S. Government is grateful to the Rwandan Government for making this reunion possible," Blinken said in a statement Friday, adding: "The United States believes in a Rwanda that is peaceful and prosperous. We reaffirm the principle of seeking political change in Rwanda and globally through peaceful means."

As the news spread on Friday, Rusesabagina's family in a statement said that "we are pleased to hear the news about Paul's release. The family is hopeful to reunite with him soon."

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Somalia

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Ethiopia

Ethiopia's new struggle over war crimes accountability (The New Humanitarian) March 29, 2023

Ahead of US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's trip to Ethiopia this month, there was widespread speculation that President Joe Biden's administration might ease restrictions on economic assistance slapped on the country during its war in northern Tigray.

Instead, while Blinken announced a large package of humanitarian funds for aid agencies working in the country, he also said Ethiopia's government must do more to set up a "credible" transitional justice process that ensures accountability for human rights abuses committed during the two-year conflict.

"Then our own ability to move forward on our engagement with Ethiopia, to include economic engagement, will also move forward," Blinken said in the capital, Addis Ababa, shortly after holding talks with Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed.

This position reflects the stance of the European Union. During the war, the US introduced sanctions on individuals accused of prolonging the conflict and suspended Ethiopia's membership in a preferential trade pact, while the EU withheld \$107 million in budgetary support, citing serious rights violations.

These have been committed by all sides, including government troops and rebel fighters led by the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF), according to investigators.

Some of the worst atrocities were by Eritrean soldiers allied to Ethiopia's military, who are accused of waging a campaign of rape and sexual slavery in Tigray and of killing hundreds of men and boys in the holy city of Axum, one of several bloody massacres.

Forces from the Amhara region that borders Tigray, another ally of the federal government, have also been accused of "ethnic cleansing" for evicting hundreds of thousands of Tigrayans from western Tigray, an area Amharas claim as their own.

Meanwhile, the UN's International Commission of Human Rights Experts on Ethiopia (ICHREE) believes Ethiopia's government used "starvation as a method of warfare" by blocking aid to Tigray and sealing off its borders. In 2021, the US estimated that these restrictions had pushed 900,000 of the six million population to the brink of famine.

Despite their seriousness, these atrocities are "only the tip of the iceberg", said Flavia Mwangovya, Amnesty International's deputy director for east and southern Africa. A communication blackout imposed on Tigray for much of the war and restrictions on access to the region mean many human rights abuses may remain hidden, making further investigations vital, she told The New Humanitarian.

Restoring ties Both the US and the EU have long insisted that three criteria must be met before they restore direct economic support to Ethiopia's government. The first two are an end to the fighting and the resumption of aid to Tigray; the third is accountability for human rights abuses.

A ceasefire signed in November has silenced the guns and seen aid trucks roll back into Tigray, where 5.2 million people need humanitarian help. The deal also calls for "a comprehensive national transitional justice policy aimed at accountability, ascertaining the truth, redress for victims, reconciliation, and healing", in line with Ethiopia's constitution and the African Union's Transitional Justice Policy Framework.

But diplomats say more effort is required on this front before ties are normalised.

Some work has been done by the government, which is facing a reconstruction bill of nearly \$20 billion and is keen to see the return of donors to help rebuild the war-battered economy.

In September, the Ministry of Justice presented a discussion paper to diplomats outlining options for transitional justice. A final version was published in January, and officials have launched a consultation process expected to last until June.

The document focuses on "truth-seeking", "healing" and "reconciliation", stating that "focusing only on criminal accountability has its drawbacks", although it does explore the possibility of prosecuting war criminals.

It proposes several models for transitional justice, including the establishment of a dedicated "truth and reconciliation commission", setting up a special prosecutor's office, and using existing institutions.

It also suggests a number of time frames for the process.

Donors would prefer focusing on crimes committed since November 2020, when the war erupted. But the Ministry of Justice suggests starting dates of 1991, when the former TPLF-dominated regime came to power, and 1995, when Ethiopia's current constitution came into force. This would entail a national process, rather than one focused on the recent war.

Ethiopia is not a member of the International Criminal Court, ruling out The Hague as an option for delivering justice, and the document dismisses the idea of an ad hoc international tribunal, such as those for Yugoslavia and Rwanda, as "neither desirable nor feasible".

"The only rational alternative is to promote the adjudication of the crimes using domestic courts – with a caveat attached in terms of institutional reforms," the document states.

A European diplomat in Addis Ababa described this work as a "step in the right direction", but added that "we are not at the point yet where we are seeing results."

Another Western diplomat said they were "concerned" about transparency, especially in relation to "criminal investigations and prosecutions".

"There is a strong commitment on paper, which is noted and welcomed, but of course, we need to see concrete outcomes," they said. "We're not going to lift restrictions overnight and suddenly pump money into the country. It's a gradual process."

Government pushback Throughout the conflict, Ethiopia's government has been sensitive to allegations of human rights abuses, criticising Western media outlets reporting on killings and sexual violence as politically biased and expelling diplomats and UN staff.

It has also blocked access to Tigray, imposing one of the world's most severe communications blackouts and barring journalists. Abiy did not admit the involvement of Eritrean troops until March 2021, despite mounting evidence of their presence.

When the US State Department released a report earlier this month documenting rights abuses in northern Ethiopia, the government called it "selective", "untimely" and "inflammatory".

Meanwhile, Ethiopia has tried to cut funding for ICHREE, the UN's probe, which the deputy prime minister has dismissed as "politically motivated".

Members of ICHREE have only visited Ethiopia once, in July last year. During that trip, they were confined to Addis Ababa and did not visit any conflict-affected areas to conduct investigations. As a result, their work has been carried out remotely.

Recently, Ethiopia sought support for a resolution at the UN Human Rights Council to terminate the body. It was eventually persuaded to drop the resolution, but only on the understanding that ICHREE's mandate will not be renewed in October, a diplomat said.

Given this track record, human rights experts worry about the government's commitment to a robust transitional justice that holds all parties equally accountable. One observer, who did not want to be named, said they are concerned about its "capacity and willingness to hold its own forces to account."

"ICHREE's mandate is to preserve evidence for accountability that may lead in the future to holding powerful people to account," they told The New Humanitarian. "That may be why the government is pushing against it so strongly."

The body was established in December 2021, following the publication of a joint report by the UN's human rights body and the state-appointed Ethiopian Human Rights Commission. It found that all parties had committed violations, conclusions that Ethiopia accepted.

However, the joint report suffered from serious gaps. It only covered the first period of active conflict in northern Ethiopia from November 2020 to June 2021, and its investigators were unable to travel to the sites of serious abuses in Tigray, such as Axum.

The joint report therefore called for further independent investigations, but the government has opposed these. Instead, it set up an "inter-ministerial task force" to implement the joint report's findings and insists further investigations will be done by national bodies under the transitional justice framework, with international experts participating as monitors.

Scepticism over government commitment The activities of the task force and those of the Ministry of Justice have been opaque, and subject to little outside scrutiny. So far, a handful of soldiers have been convicted for abuses committed during the war, but their identities and the nature of their crimes have not been made public.

Meanwhile, the government has sought to downplay accusations of abuses. In its initial investigation into the Axum massacre, for example, the Ministry of Justice suggested most of the victims were combatants and that some of the perpetrators may have been criminals dressed in Eritrean and Ethiopian military uniforms provided by the TPLF.

Only later did the government accept that the victims were civilians killed by Eritrean soldiers. Some fear future investigations could follow a similar trajectory.

For its part, the TPLF has issued similar denials when faced with accusations that its forces targeted civilians. In February 2022, when Amnesty International released a report with evidence that Tigray fighters had killed civilians and raped women in a series of Amhara towns, it dismissed the rights group's findings as "partial and misleading" and promised an investigation that never materialised.

On 24 March, the new interim president of Tigray, Getachew Reda, underlined the importance of "accountability and justice for the genocide inflicted on the people of Tigray in the war" but made no mention of crimes committed by his side.

Abadir M. Ibrahim, associate director of the Human Rights Program at Harvard Law School and a former advisor to the Ministry of Justice, said he is "sceptical" that Ethiopian government officials will "subject themselves to a process that will reveal their human rights violations and then possibly even end up in their prosecution".

He fears that, to appease donors and regain funding, the government might launch "a process that looks like transitional justice, but they're able to control the results", he told The New Humanitarian.

Others are more optimistic, however. "What I like about Ethiopia is that they have agency," said an African Union official. "They are doing things on their own and we should give them breathing space."

Daniel Bekele, head of the Ethiopian Human Rights Commission, says he is encouraged that the government accepted the findings of his body's joint report with the UN and added that "it is important to build on the concrete steps that have been taken".

"The transitional justice process must be nationally led and owned," Daniel said. "That does not mean there is no role and

space for contributions from international partners.”

A transitional justice mechanism is due to be established close to Ethiopian new year in September. Such a body would not have the authority to investigate and prosecute soldiers from Eritrea, a sovereign country. Its leader, Isaias Afwerki, has dismissed allegations against his troops as “a fantasy”.

A Western diplomat described the issue of accountability for crimes committed by Eritrean soldiers as “a tricky question” that is “up to Ethiopia” to answer. Their government and others are pushing for UN experts to monitor Ethiopia’s national investigations, something Addis Ababa has said it is open to.

“It is not going to be perfect, definitely, there is no such thing as a perfect transitional justice process,” they said.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

EUROPE

The Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, War Crimes Chamber

Official Court Website [English translation]

Bosnia Seeks Wartime Army Commander’s Extradition from Turkey (Balkan Transitional Justice)

By: Emina Dizdarevic

March 23, 2023

The Bosnian state court has asked Turkey for the extradition of Sakib Mahmuljin, wartime commander of the Bosnian Army’s Third Corps, after he failed to appear to serve his eight-year war crimes sentence.

The Bosnian state court told BIRN that it has written to the Turkish authorities seeking the extradition of Sakib Mahmuljin, who was jailed for eight years for failing to stop Middle Eastern volunteer fighters mistreating and murdering captured Serb soldiers, medical staff and civilians, but failed to appear to start serving his sentence.

In November, the state court decided to ask Interpol to issue a ‘red notice’ calling on countries worldwide to arrest Mahmuljin. Four months later, Mahmuljin had still not reported to prison, so a formal request was sent to Turkey, where he is believed to be staying.

“Convict Sakib Mahmuljin failed to report to prison to serve his sentence. Following the issuance of an international arrest warrant, the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina sent a letter rogatory to the Republic of Turkey, requesting extradition of convict Sakib Mahmuljin,” the court told BIRN.

Mahmuljin’s lawyer had claimed he was receiving medical treatment in Turkey, but the court said that “no medical documentation for the sentenced person has been submitted to the Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina”.

Mahmuljin was convicted of war crimes under a final verdict in April 2022. The court found that, in his capacity as commander of the Third Corps and superior officer to the El Mujahideen unit of Middle Eastern volunteer fighters, Mahmuljin failed to prevent the murders and inhumane treatment of prisoners of war, medical staff and civilians.

The court also found that Mahmuljin knew or had the reason to know that members of the El Mujahideen unit were preparing to commit the crimes.

According to the charges, members of the El Mujahideen unit, a detachment of fighters from Middle Eastern countries, killed at least 55 captured Bosnian Serb Army soldiers in the period from July to September 1995 and cut some of their heads off.

The unit operated as part of the Bosnian Army's Third Corps, although Mahmuljin argued during the trial that he was not responsible for the crimes committed by the foreign fighters.

The news that he had not turned up to serve his sentence in December angered Bosnian Serb war victims' associations.

"It defies all understanding that Bosnian judiciary expected Mahmuljin 'to report to prison to serve his sentence'," Goran Timotija, president of the Organisation of Families of Captured and Killed Soldiers and Missing Civilians of Trnovo, said at the time.

"Instead of pre-empting his flight and apprehending him in time to serve his sentence, they expected him to report to prison as if he was facing a summer vacation, not a jail term," Timotija said.

The case highlighted a wider problem with war crimes convicts failing to turn up to serve their sentences and indictees who live outside the country being unavailable for trial.

The Bosnian judiciary currently has 172 active arrest warrants in war crimes cases.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)

Official Website of the ICTY

Kosovo Ex-President Thaci's War Crimes Trial Opens in The Hague (Balkan Transitional Justice) By: Xhorxhina Bami
April 3, 2023

One of the most important court cases arising from the 1990s Yugoslav wars, the trial of former Kosovo President Hashim Thaci and three other Kosovo Liberation Army officers turned politicians, has opened at the Hague-based Kosovo Specialist Chambers.

Former Kosovo President Hashim Thaci and his three co-defendants went on trial at the Kosovo Specialist Chambers on Monday morning, charged with war crimes and crimes against humanity allegedly committed between at least March 1998 and September 1999 in Kosovo and neighbouring Albania during and just after the war with Serbian forces.

The four defendants, Hashim Thaci, Kadri Veseli, Jakup Krasniqi and Rexhep Selimi have all pleaded not guilty.

All four were senior figures in the Kosovo Liberation Army, KLA guerrilla organisation during the war and were involved in leading the fight against the Yugoslav Army, Serbian police and paramilitaries, and all became senior politicians in the post-war period.

Thaci served as prime minister and cut short his term as president in order to face trial in The Hague. Kadri Veseli is a former parliamentary speaker and leader of the Kosovo Democratic Party, PDK. Jakup Krasniqi was the chairman of the national council of the Social Democratic Initiative, NISMA party, and Rexhep Selimi was the head of the Vetevendosje party's parliamentary group of MPs at the time of his arrest.

They are charged with the crimes against humanity of persecution, imprisonment, other inhumane acts, torture, murder and enforced disappearances, and the war crimes of unlawful or arbitrary arrest and detention, cruel treatment, torture and murder.

The prosecution is expected to set out the charges and evidence against the defendants in its opening statement. It is expected to call on evidence from over 310 witnesses.

Thaci and his three co-defendants are accused of being responsible for the crimes individually as members of a 'joint criminal enterprise', of bearing superior responsibility for the offences as leaders of the KLA, and of aiding and abetting the crimes.

The indictment claims that the defendants sought to stamp their control over Kosovo "by means including unlawfully intimidating, mistreating, committing violence against, and removing those deemed to be opponents".

It accuses them of bearing criminal responsibility for nearly 100 murders committed at KLA detention sites in Kosovo and northern Albania. The detainees were ethnic Albanian, Serb, and Roma, and were considered to be opponents by the KLA because they were perceived to be "collaborating or associating" with Yugoslav forces, officials or state institutions.

The so-called special court is located in the Netherlands and staffed by internationals, and was established under pressure from the country's Western allies, who believe Kosovo's own justice system is not robust enough to try KLA cases and protect witnesses from intimidation.

The Specialist Chambers face a lack of trust among Kosovo's Albanian majority, which is problematic because the court is part of Kosovo's judicial system. Many Kosovo Albanians believe that it is ethnically biased and denigrates the KLA's just war against Serbian repression.

Members of the Kosovo Albanian diaspora announced that they would hold a protest in front of the Specialist Chambers during the opening of the trial on Monday morning.

On Sunday, Kosovo Albanians staged a protest in the country's capital Pristina in support of Thaci and his three co-defendants who are being perceived as heroes in their own country.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Domestic Prosecutions In The Former Yugoslavia

Yugoslav Ex-Officer Pleads Not Guilty to Croatian Village Attack (Balkan Transitional Justice) By:

Milica Stojanovic

March 28, 2023/p>

Former Yugoslav People's Army officer Dusan Loncar pleaded not guilty to ordering an attack on the Croatian village of Lovas in 1991 that left several civilians dead.

Dusan Loncar entered a not guilty plea at Belgrade Higher Court on Tuesday, insisting that he did not issue an order to attack the Croatian village of Lovas in October 1991, causing civilian casualties.

"After 32 years [since the attack], I saw that order for the first time when my lawyer got the documents [from the court] after the preparatory hearing," Loncar told the court.

"I do not feel responsible for the attack, nor did I order it," he said.

He claimed that in October 1991, he was not actually the commander of the Yugoslav People's Army's Second Guards Brigade, which was allegedly involved in the crime, but its acting commander, and that he was only named commander in November that year.

According to the indictment, on October 9, 1991, Loncar "ordered an attack on the civilian population that resulted in the death of people".

He is alleged to have issued an order directing his main forces to blockade the village and use artillery to attack the buildings, while auxiliary forces "clear the village of ZNG [Croatian National Guard] and MUP [Interior Ministry] members, as well as the hostile population".

Loncar said he did not issue or even see the order, but he did not deny that the attack happened, claiming that "Lovas was a military garrison".

The indictment names seven people as direct victims of the order, although the death toll in further violence in the days that

followed was much higher.

Serbian forces, including Yugoslav People's Army troops and paramilitaries, captured Lovas on October 10, 1991.

On October 17, they rounded up around 70 men from Lovas, aged 18 to 65, detained them and tortured some of them.

The next day, two members of Serbian forces were ordered to use the civilians as a human shield in a minefield, according to the indictment.

When they got to the minefield, members of the Dusan Silni (Dusan the Great) paramilitary unit told the civilians to walk in a line and check with their feet where the mines were.

When one man fell over, a mine exploded, and at the same time a number of soldiers started shooting at the Croats.

Loncar said that the crimes that happened after the capture of Lovas were something that "no one should be proud of", and that he "is ashamed for not being able to prevent it".

He also claimed that a local Territorial Defence unit, although subordinate to him, "was doing what it wanted".

Eight lower-level perpetrators have already been tried for the crime – Serb policemen, Territorial Defence fighters, Yugoslav People's Army soldiers and members of the Dusan Silni paramilitary unit.

In November 2020, Belgrade Court of Appeals sentenced defendants Sasa Stojanovic to six years, Darko Peric and Radovan Vljakovic to four years and Radisav Josipovic, Jovan Dimitrijevic and Zoran Kosijer to three years for involvement in the crime and killing 28 civilians.

Loncar testified at this trial that his superior gave him an order saying that his unit should enter the village of Lovas, but insisted that he did not give that order to his men.

He also told the court that he only found out about the killings in the minefield after they happened.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Turkey

Turkish and Egyptian Foreign Ministers Meet as Countries Relaunch Diplomatic Relations (Democracy Now) March 20, 2023

The foreign ministers of Turkey and Egypt met in Cairo for their first official talks in a decade as the two countries move to restore ties. The pair agreed to reestablish ambassadorships "as soon as possible." Turkey and Egypt severed ties in 2013 after President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who was then army chief, led the ouster of the Muslim Brotherhood's Mohamed Morsi, a Turkish ally. Tensions have also simmered over the conflict in Libya and over maritime borders in the eastern Mediterranean.

Bosnia demands extradition of war criminal from Turkey (Turkish Minute) March 23, 2023

Bosnia formally asked Turkey to extradite a convicted war criminal, a court said Thursday, after the former general Sakib Mahmuljin fled the Balkan country following his trial, Agence France-Presse reported.

"After an international arrest warrant was issued, the court of Bosnia-Herzegovina has sent an extradition request to Turkey," the court told AFP.

Mahmuljin, 70, was the former commander of the 3rd corps of the Bosnian army, composed mainly of local Muslims, and served during the country's bloody civil war in the 1990s.

The general was sentenced last year to eight years in prison over the execution of more than 50 Bosnian Serb prisoners of war by troops under his command in Vozuca and Zavidovici in the northeast of the country.

Despite being convicted, Mahmuljin was released after his trial and did not report to prison to serve his sentence.

Reports in local media said the general left Bosnia for alleged medical reasons.

Mahmuljin is one of the few top Bosnian Muslim army officials to be convicted for crimes committed during the 1992-1995 war that pitted Muslim, Croat, and Serb communities against each other, leaving more than 100,000 dead.

The crimes were committed by the "El Moudjahid" unit attached to his corps, which was made up of hundreds of mainly foreign jihadists from Africa, the Middle East and some Western countries, who joined forces with Bosnian Muslims.

Most of the foreign Islamist fighters who enlisted in Bosnia's conflict left after the war ended with a US-brokered peace deal in 1995.

Thousands protest the Jindires massacre in Qamishlo (ANF News) March 29,2023

In the autonomous region of northern and eastern Syria, protests against the murder of four Kurds from Afrin by Turkish-backed mercenaries continue. In Qamishlo, thousands of people took to the streets on Wednesday to condemn the "Newroz massacre" and called on the international community to act against the war crimes and human rights violations in the Turkish-jihadist occupation zone.

"The Western community of values, guided by principles such as the universal validity and indivisibility of human rights and respect for human dignity, continues to turn a deaf ear and a blind eye to the inhumanity practised by the occupiers in Afrin and other occupied areas of northern Syria. We do not want to accept this any longer," was the message of the demonstration in Qamishlo, in which people from Tirbespiyê, Til Hemîs, Til Birak and Amûdê also took part.

"By remaining silent, you are not only making yourself complicit. You are violating the principles of your organisation's charter and thus international law," said PYD politician Hêvî Silêman, looking at the United Nations office. The crowd behind her chanted: "Long live the resistance of Afrin" and "The occupation will be crushed - Afrin will be liberated". Banners read, among other things, "The spirit of the resistant people of Afrin will defeat the invasion".

The four Kurds whose murder was protested were originally from the district of Shiye near Afrin. They had been living in Jindires district since the invasion of Afrin in 2018. They were shot dead by mercenaries of the Ahrar al-Sharqiya militia, which is loyal to Turkey, on the night of Newroz, the Kurdish New Year, celebrated on 21 March. An eyewitness, whose brother is among those killed, reported that the terrorists first insulted the men for lighting a Newroz fire and then threw stones at them before turning their weapons on them. Protests against the killing of the Kurds have now been going on for over a week. In Afrin itself, people are also taking to the streets daily, demanding the withdrawal of all militias from the region and the release of all Kurdish prisoners, as well as the return of houses and other property seized by the occupation.

[[back to contents](#)]

Kosovo Specialist Chambers

Azerbaijan

[[back to contents](#)]

Russia

Russia-Ukraine war exposed human rights 'double standards' (Al Jazeera) By Usaid Siddiqui
March 28, 2023

The invasion of Ukraine has exposed the "double standards" of human rights internationally, a new Amnesty International report has said, with the West adopting a tough response to Russia's war of aggression while also maintaining a "deafening silence" on rights abuses around the world.

The UK-based rights organisation published its annual 2022 report on Tuesday, highlighting the state of human rights in 156 countries.

“In 2022, we had the fantastic example of how the world came to support and show solidarity with the Ukrainian people. But we did not have a similar kind of support and solidarity for the Palestinian people, the people of Ethiopia, Myanmar, and the Democratic Republic of Congo,” Agnes Callamard, Amnesty’s secretary-general, told Al Jazeera from Paris on Monday.

The international response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine was “robust and welcomed”, characterised by public denunciations and marked by “strong calls against the many war crimes being committed”, Callamard said.

“It was also marked by commitment and actual actions to support international investigation into those war crimes. The International Criminal Court did intervene very quickly and frankly, very unusually,” she added.

In March 2022, International Criminal Court (ICC) Prosecutor Karim Khan said he was opening an investigation into alleged war crimes in Ukraine, dating as far back as the 2013 Maidan protests. At that time, demonstrations erupted in central Kyiv against the country’s then-Russia-friendly government and persisted until the fall of then-President Viktor Yanukovich’s administration in early 2014.

Earlier this month, the ICC issued an arrest warrant for President Vladimir Putin for allegedly committing war crimes in Ukraine.

Callamard said because the reaction to Ukraine had been so “multifaceted”, covering many dimensions including the issue of Ukrainian refugees, it made the “silence, the indifference and the neglect very glaring” when compared with other instances of human rights violations.

Israeli occupation, refugees

The Amnesty secretary-general said that while the report had many examples of double standards regarding human rights, the occupation of the Palestinians was a “particularly important one”.

“Without making any comparison between Russia’s aggression and Israel ... it is clear the Palestinian people are under a regime of oppression. A regime of occupation and a regime of apartheid,” Callamard told Al Jazeera.

“At a time when the international community did so much ... for the people of Ukraine, the people of Palestine lived through the most deadly year in decades,” Callamard noted.

More than 150 Palestinians were killed in the occupied West Bank and occupied East Jerusalem last year, including 36 children. In May, Al Jazeera reporter Shireen Abu Akleh was killed by an Israeli soldier while covering a raid in Jenin, leading to worldwide condemnation.

Palestinian mourners carry pictures of slain Al Jazeera journalist Shireen Abu Akleh with words in Arabic that read: ‘Shireen, the voice of Palestine’.

The Amnesty report also condemned Europe’s approach and attitude to Ukrainian refugees compared with refugees from other nations.

“Generous reception of most people from Ukraine stood in sharp contrast to the often violent rejection and abuse of refugees and migrants at Europe’s external borders,” Amnesty said in the report.

“This double standard revealed the racism inherent in EU external border policy and practice,” it said.

Asylum seekers queue for food distribution along the roadside where thousands are living without shelter and exposed to the elements following the burning down of their camp, near the Kara Tepe camp on the island of Lesbos on September 13, 2020. A woman pushing a stroller with a small child in it is in the centre of the image.

In the United States, the report notes that 25,000 Haitians were expelled between September 2021 and May 2022 without due process, a move that runs counter to international law.

Among other crises highlighted in the report, Amnesty said the more than two-year-long civil war in Tigray, Ethiopia, was one of the “deadliest in recent memory”. According to some estimates, hundreds of thousands of people involved in the conflict were killed last year alone. Separately, countries such as Mali, Venezuela and Yemen were also plagued by armed fighting or systemic violence “associated with human rights violations”.

Ukraine a ‘blueprint’ for human rights

Ukraine should provide a “blueprint” internationally for what needs to be done to protect a population from serious rights abuses, Callamard told Al Jazeera. “What can be done for Ukrainian refugees, surely can be done for Syrian refugees,” she said.

“What are the reasons for the international community not to multiply what they have done for the Ukrainian people and do that for other people? The only response to that question will be self-interest,” she added.

Asked if she was optimistic about the state of human rights in 2023, Callamard said: “Sadly, while we do have a good model with Ukraine ... we don’t have a great deal of trust that countries can act in ways that focus on the global and universal good and ... rules that apply for everybody everywhere.”

State Dept. Proposes Joint Tribunal to Try Russian Leaders (New York Times) By Glenn Thrush and Charlie Savage
March 28, 2023

The Biden administration is calling for the creation of a joint tribunal in which Ukraine and international allies would try Russian leaders for crimes of aggression, but some human rights lawyers worry the plan has a fatal flaw:

It might shield President Vladimir V. Putin from prosecution.

Beth Van Schaack, the State Department’s ambassador at large for global criminal justice, said on Monday that the administration supported the formation of “an internationalized national court” in which the United States and other allies would assist Ukrainian prosecutors in bringing cases against Russian leaders for the crime of aggression, or illegally invading another country.

“We are committed to working with Ukraine, and peace-loving countries around the world, to stand up, staff and resource such a tribunal in a way that will achieve comprehensive accountability for the international crimes being committed in Ukraine,” she said during a war crimes conference at Catholic University in Washington.

Even as her remarks represented one of the most emphatic statements to date indicating U.S. support for prosecuting the crime of aggression, it also underscored the challenge of seeking to hold world leaders liable for their actions while they remain in power. By also establishing clear limits on how far the administration is willing to go, Ms. Van Schaack acknowledged its reluctance to create a precedent that could pave the way for a similar court to prosecute American leaders.

Critics of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine have debated rival proposals for holding Russian leaders accountable over the war, including establishing a hybrid court rooted in the Ukrainian system, with international elements, or creating a purely international chamber with jurisdiction over the crime of aggression.

While details remain to be worked out and would likely require changes to Ukrainian law, legal specialists say, a hybrid court could include both Ukrainian and international judges, and have jurisdiction over the crime of aggression under both Ukrainian and international law. It could also convene outside the war zone, including at The Hague.

Ukraine, like other countries, allows sitting heads of state to claim immunity from prosecution. In setting up the proposed hybrid court, Ukraine’s legislature could make an exception, but if Mr. Putin were ever arrested and brought before the court, his lawyers could argue that the exception was illegitimate.

David J. Scheffer, who served as the U.S. ambassador at large for war crimes issues from 1997 to 2001, said the State Department’s proposal of a joint tribunal rooted in Ukrainian law fell short.

“This is disappointing,” added Mr. Scheffer, who has called for a special international tribunal, not a national or hybrid court, to prosecute Russian leaders.

Several former diplomats and academics want the United Nations General Assembly to set up a purely international judicial institution like the International Criminal Court at The Hague, which prosecutes war crimes and has ruled that it need not honor immunity for sitting heads of state. They argue that such a new court could cite that precedent, making it harder for Mr. Putin to invoke immunity and get a case thrown out.

(Aggression is different than war crimes, which involve atrocities committed during a war regardless of the legitimacy of the conflict.)

“Aggression is a crime perpetrated by leadership; if the leaders have immunity, what are we even doing?” said Jennifer Trahan, a global affairs professor at New York University who favors a tribunal independent of Ukraine’s judicial system. “We

are at a Nuremberg moment. Do we really want to deter aggression and the use of force? If we do, we have to have a real deterrent response.”

But Harold Hongju Koh, a professor at Yale Law School who served as a top lawyer in the State Department in the Obama administration, argued that a hybrid tribunal, modeled after a similar court that tried leaders of the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, could be up and running far quicker.

Mr. Koh noted that even under a purely international model, the issue of overcoming immunity for sitting heads of state is far from assured.

“The best should not be the enemy of the good,” Mr. Koh said. “A hybrid court has the advantage that such a court has actually worked. The Ukrainians actually have a prosecutorial unit that is working and trying cases. Do you want to get on a train that is going somewhere and see if it can get you where you want to go, or wait for an entirely new train to be built? Why not get on the train?”

Vedant Patel, the State Department spokesman, said on Tuesday that the new approach should not be seen as “an alternative or replacement” for activities by the International Criminal Court. “What this is, is another mechanism in which we support all international efforts to examine atrocities,” he said.

This month, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant accusing Mr. Putin and one of his top officials of unlawfully abducting Ukrainian children and transporting them to their country.

But that tribunal lacks jurisdiction to prosecute the separate crime of aggression against citizens of countries that are not a party to its treaty and have not signed on to an amendment that added aggression to its purview. Russia has not, and neither has the United States.

Some in the United States — especially at the Pentagon — also think the court should not exercise jurisdiction for the other offenses in its purview, like war crimes, against citizens of countries that are not a party to the treaty that created it.

But late last year, Congress amended a law to allow support for the court’s investigations arising from the war.

Still, the Biden administration is split over how to work with the court. While agencies like the Justice and State Departments support sharing information with it about Russian war crimes, the Pentagon has objected, fearing creating a precedent that could make it easier to prosecute Americans in the future.

In her remarks, Ms. Van Schaack appeared to obliquely refer to the dispute, noting “the implementation of the new legislative amendments to help the I.C.C. prosecutor is under review.”

Ms. Van Schaack, who helped investigate war crimes in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, said American officials and European partners, working with the newly created International Center for the Prosecution of the Crime of Aggression in The Hague, would “build criminal dossiers against those leaders responsible for planning, preparing, initiating or waging this war of aggression for future trials.”

The Justice Department is increasingly focused on a similar supporting role, providing Ukraine’s prosecutors with logistical help, training and direct assistance in major cases.

Apart from assisting prosecutors in Ukraine, any collected evidence could be used for war crimes and genocide prosecutions, and might even spur further sanctions against Moscow, she added.

Mr. Scheffer, who helped create international judicial systems to prosecute defendants from Rwanda, Sierra Leone and the former Yugoslavia, said that nesting prosecutions in a national court — as opposed to creating a completely international court — could marginalize the effort to hold Mr. Putin responsible.

“I am skeptical there will be a lot of financial support for an internationalized Ukrainian court, by the time they get around to bringing charges,” Mr. Scheffer said.

Prosecutor General: Russians committed more than 9,000 war crimes in Bucha district (Ukrinform) March 31, 2023

Russian invaders committed more than 9,000 war crimes in Bucha district, Kyiv region.

According to Prosecutor General of Ukraine Andriy Kostin, "over 9,000 war crimes were committed in Bucha district during 33 days of occupation. Terrible numbers... More than 270 crimes per day. More than 1,400 civilians were killed. Many of them

were tortured. Thirty-seven children were killed, 52 children were injured," the Prosecutor General's Office posted on Telegram.

Over the past year, Kostin emphasized, the prosecutor's office brought charges against nearly 100 Russian service members. Indictments against 35 of them were sent to court. Among them is a colonel-general, commander of Russia's central military district, who directly led the seizure of Sumy, Chernihiv, and Kyiv regions.

Two Russian servicemen were sentenced to 12 years in prison for unlawful detention of civilians and looting, the Prosecutor General noted.

In his opinion, "all these crimes are not a coincidence. They are part of Russia's planned strategy aimed at destroying Ukraine as a state and Ukrainians as a nation."

"We will not stop until all the organizers and perpetrators of war crimes are brought to justice.

Today, we are holding another round of discussions with international partners, dedicated to building a network of comprehensive liability for international crimes," Kostin stressed.

Bucha may serve as venue for international tribunal on Russian crimes, PM Shmyhal says (Yahoo News) April 1, 2023

This is where those who gave the orders, and who executed them — including the top leadership of Russia — will be tried, the prime minister said.

"When in 1945 the Allies were choosing a place for the trial of Nazism, they chose Nuremberg," Shmyhal said.

"Because the criminal ideology was forged there. When we choose a venue for the trial, Bucha should be considered as one of the options. After all, it was here, as the president of Ukraine (Volodymyr Zelenskyy) has emphasized, that the entire criminal nature of the Putin regime and the Russian occupation first manifested itself." Shmyhal said that only justice and fairness can heal the wounds of Bucha.

"Today, no one doubts that Russia and its leadership must pay for the evil they have done," the Ukrainian prime minister said.

"Pay with freedom, pay with money, pay with the status of a pariah state. Ukraine is now working with international partners to establish a special international tribunal. The next step is the confiscation of Russian assets that are frozen in the West and the transfer of these resources to rebuild Ukraine."

Shmyhal added that even more powerful sanctions are needed to prevent any new 'Buchas' from happening again and to ensure that Russia runs out of resources to wage war against Ukraine.

The March 31 Bucha Summit was chaired by Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and attended by Moldovan President Maia Sandu, Polish President Andrzej Duda, Lithuanian President Gitanas Nausėda, Estonian President Alar Karis, the prime ministers of Slovakia, Slovenia, and Croatia, and other world leaders.

The Bucha Summit participants adopted a declaration supporting the prosecution of those responsible for Russian war crimes in Ukraine.

Ukraine war: Russian strike on eastern city Kostyantynivka 'kills six' (BBC) By Laurence Peter
April 2, 2023

Ukraine says heavy Russian shelling has killed at least six civilians in Kostyantynivka, an industrial city near embattled Bakhmut in eastern Ukraine.

Missiles and rockets damaged 16 apartment blocks and other buildings including a nursery school, head of the presidential staff Andriy Yermak said on social media.

The toll was not verified by the BBC.

The city is just 27km (17 miles) west of Bakhmut, where many have died on both sides in months of heavy fighting.

Mr Yermak said the Russians hit Kostyantynivka with S-300 surface-to-air missiles and Uragan rockets, and at least eight people were injured.

The city is near Kramatorsk and Slovyansk, two key cities which Russia is striving to capture in order to complete its

occupation of Donetsk region.

Kostyantynivka's population before Russia's February 2022 invasion was about 70,000.

Explosions also rocked Russian-occupied Melitopol on Sunday, the southern city's Ukrainian mayor Ivan Fedorov said. He said the blasts targeted the rail depot there.

Melitopol has been hit repeatedly by Ukrainian missiles because it is a transport hub for the Russian military, lying just north of Russian-occupied Crimea. Russian ammunition hunger

On Saturday Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu told fellow Russian commanders that steps were being taken to ramp up ammunition production.

"The volume of supplies of the most needed ammunition has been determined. Necessary measures are being taken to increase them," he said.

Independent military analysts have said repeatedly that Russia is running short of precision weapons, after firing so many in the Ukraine war.

Mr Shoigu and the defence ministry have been sharply criticised by Yevgeny Prigozhin, head of Russia's Wagner mercenary group, who accuses them of depriving his troops of key ammunition. Wagner - officially called a private military company - has suffered heavy losses in the Bakhmut fighting, with convicts released from Russian prisons drafted in to swell the group's numbers.

Ukraine's President Volodymyr Zelensky insists that, despite heavy casualties, his forces entrenched in ruined Bakhmut will not surrender the city. The Russians are reported to have made small gains there in recent days.

Bakhmut has little strategic value, but Ukraine has seen it as an important drain on Russia's military equipment and manpower.

In a Telegram post on Sunday Mr Zelensky praised his compatriots in a message marking a year since Russian forces were expelled from the Kyiv region.

"Ukrainian people! You have stopped the greatest anti-human force of our time. You have stopped a force that despises and wants to destroy everything that gives meaning to people. And we will free all our lands," he said.

Ukrainian soldier pleads 'partly guilty' at Russia's first war crime trial (Reuters) April 4, 2023

A Ukrainian soldier pleaded "partly guilty" on Tuesday at Russia's first trial for war crimes in connection with its military campaign in Ukraine.

Anton Cherednik, a member of Ukraine's naval infantry, faced charges in the southern Russian city of Rostov-on-Don of trying to seize power by force, of using prohibited methods of warfare and of murdering a civilian in Mariupol in March last year in the conflict's early days.

It was the first time Russia had accused a member of Ukraine's armed forces of war crimes, according to Russian news outlets and the court's press service.

Cherednik stood in the enclosed glass dock wearing a dark t-shirt and coat.

Outside the court, his lawyer Vladimir Bakulov said Cherednik had pleaded "partly guilty" and had requested a meeting with the judge to explain his position. The case will resume next week, Russian news agencies reported.

Prosecutors say Cherednik detained two men in Mariupol, a largely Russian-speaking Ukrainian port that fell to Russian forces several weeks later and has now been declared annexed by Moscow.

They say he ordered the men to speak Ukrainian, and shot one of them who did not use the correct pronunciation, the TASS news agency reported.

Russian forces seized Mariupol last May after weeks of attritional fighting.

Ukraine says Russia destroyed 95% of the city and killed tens of thousands of civilians. It accuses Russia of several war crimes there, including the bombing of a maternity hospital and a theatre where hundreds of civilians were sheltering.

Russia says it does not target civilians, and that the incidents were staged by Ukraine.

Ukraine has tried and sentenced a number of Russian soldiers for killing unarmed civilians.

Russian official sought by ICC for war crimes speaks to UN (Al Jazeera) April 5, 2023

Russia's commissioner for children's rights, who is being sought for war crimes, will brief a controversial United Nations meeting that Russia called to counter what it claims is disinformation about Ukrainian children taken to Russia.

Russia's UN Mission confirmed on Tuesday that Maria Lvova-Belova will be the lead speaker, by video link, to an informal meeting of the Security Council that has sparked opposition from Ukraine's supporters.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued arrest warrants last month for her and President Vladimir Putin over their suspected involvement in the unlawful deportation and transfer of children from occupied areas of Ukraine to Russia.

The United Kingdom said it has blocked outside broadcast of the meeting in protest and will not send an ambassador. The US mission said it will not send its ambassador, either.

"The fact that they are inviting someone indicted by the ICC speaks for itself," UK deputy ambassador James Kariuki said.

Later, the UK mission added in a statement: "If she wants to give an account of her actions she can do so in The Hague," the Netherlands city where the ICC has its headquarters.

The Associated Press reported on Lvova-Belova's involvement in the abduction of Ukrainian orphans in October, in the first investigation to follow the abduction process all the way to Russia, relying on dozens of interviews and documents.

It found the open effort to put Ukrainian children up for adoption in Russia was well under way. Ukrainian officials claimed at the time that nearly 8,000 children had been deported to Russia, but the exact number was difficult to determine.

When it announced the warrants on March 17, the ICC alleged Putin and Lvova-Belova were responsible for the war crime of unlawful deportation and transfer of children from occupied areas of Ukraine into Russia.

Their chances of facing a trial are remote as Moscow does not recognise the court's jurisdiction. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov at the time called the ICC action "legally void" and "outrageous and unacceptable".

'Baseless and illogical'

Other speakers expected to address the informal Security Council meeting are the adviser on humanitarian programmes in Lvova-Belova's office and the commissioners for human rights and children's rights in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region, which is partly Russian occupied.

Russia's UN mission said Wednesday's meeting is aimed at providing "objective information" about children in conflict areas in the eastern Donbas, which includes Donetsk, and Russian measures to evacuate them from danger.

The mission claimed Western media and some delegations misrepresented the evacuations as "abduction", "forced displacement", and "adoption" and said Russia was attempting to destroy their Ukrainian identity.

"Such a position is not only baseless and illogical, it is also inhumane as it virtually calls for leaving orphaned or uncared-for children in the midst of hostilities," the mission's statement said.

Poland's UN Ambassador Krzysztof Szczerski, whose country is a close ally of Ukraine, told reporters having Lvova-Belova brief the council "is not appropriate".

"We have to treat seriously the ICC's arrest warrants," he said. "So it's surely not the person to describe the atrocities and horrors of the children being kidnapped and brought by force to Russia."

On Tuesday, Lvova-Belova told a press conference in Moscow she was ready to send deported children back to Ukraine if their families requested it.

According to a report from her office, 16 children from nine families have been reunited with their relatives living in Ukraine or elsewhere since March 29. She, however, refused to publish a complete list of Ukrainian children brought to Russia.

[back to contents]

MIDDLE-EAST

Iraq

Grotian Moment: The International War Crimes Trial Blog

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Syria

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Yemen

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Special Tribunal for Lebanon

**Official Website of the Special Tribunal for Lebanon
In Focus: Special Tribunal for Lebanon (UN)**

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Israel and Palestine

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Gulf Region

[\[back to contents\]](#)

ASIA

Afghanistan

Former Australian soldier charged with war crime, murder in Afghanistan granted bail (Anadolu Agency)
March 28, 2023

A court in Australia granted bail to a former special forces soldier who was arrested last week on charges of murder during his deployment in Afghanistan, local media reported on Tuesday.

Former Australian special forces soldier Oliver Schulz was arrested for killing Afghan civilian Dad Mohammed in central Uruzgan province in 2012, ABC News reported.

However, during his appearance in Sydney's Downing Centre Local Court, his lawyer pleaded for granting him bail as he is facing a potentially dangerous situation in the prison.

“There is no getting around it. I'm afraid he is at risk of grave harm,” the broadcaster quoted barrister Phillip Boulten as telling the court.

The court accepted his plea and granted bail with conditions, including daily reporting to police and a night curfew. Schulz will also not be allowed to communicate with his former colleagues in Afghanistan.

If the court finds him guilty, he could face a maximum penalty of life imprisonment.

Schulz, 41, was arrested by police at Jindabyne in the New South Wales Snowy Mountains last week and charged with a war crime and murder.

He is also the first current or former Australian soldier to be arrested and charged with a war crime under Australian law.

Australia has conducted a years-long investigation into alleged war crimes committed by its forces in Afghanistan.

In 2020, 39 Australian soldiers were accused of unlawful killings of Afghan civilians or prisoners.

A report commissioned by the inspector-general of the Australian defense force found “credible information” that Australian soldiers murdered civilians and prisoners in Afghanistan.

According to the report, 25 current or former personnel were involved in serious crimes, either carrying out the offenses themselves or being “accessories.”

Gen. Angus Campbell, chief of the Australian defense force, had also offered an apology to Afghans over the killings.

Minister Seeks Justice against 'War Crimes Committed' in Afghanistan (TOLO News) March 30, 2023

Countries that have committed war crimes in Afghanistan in the last four decades and have killed Afghans under various names should be sent to the International Criminal Court, said Khalil Rahman Haqqani, the Acting Minister of Refugees and Repatriation.

Addressing an event of aid distribution in Paktia province, Haqqani said that some countries are still trying to create problems for Afghanistan.

“The former Soviet government and all its slaves, whether they are inside the country or outside, America's NATO, including the countries that destroyed Afghanistan, they are responsible for this today. They should respond to Afghans and should be brought before the international court,” Haqqani stated.

Meanwhile, analysts said that an impartial investigation of war crimes in Afghanistan is essential.

“International courts can bring those countries that have committed war crimes to justice, but most of the countries that have intervened in Afghanistan and came to occupy have some documentations that they have made some protocols with then governments and they have come on the basis of those protocols,” said political analyst Aziz Maarj.

“Sadly, during the past forty years, Afghanistan has been invaded by both regional and other countries. The International Criminal Court has the authority to look into war crime cases involving countries that are United Nations members on a global scale,” said Hamid Aziz Mujaddidi, an analyst in political affairs.

The acting minister of refugees and repatriation said he considers unity among the people essential to support the current government.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC)

Official Website of the Extraordinary Chambers [English]

Official Website of the United Nations Assistance to the Khmer Rouge Trials (UNAKRT)

Cambodia Tribunal Monitor

CHRC reps check into Samphan's prison life (The Phnomh Penh Post) By Ry Sochan

March 27, 2023

Former Khmer Rouge head of state Khieu Samphan is currently imprisoned in Kandal provincial prison, where he is serving out a life sentence for crimes against humanity.

According to officials from the Cambodian Human Rights Committee (CHRC) who visited Samphan in prison to observe his conditions, the former Democratic Kampuchea (DK) head of state who worked closely with Pol Pot during the reign of terror is still in good health, eating full meals and able to push his wheelchair on his own.

Samphan was found guilty by the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC), commonly known as the Khmer Rouge tribunal, for crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide against Cambodia's ethnic Vietnamese population.

The CHRC said that after carrying out an inspection of the human rights situation in Kandal prison, its team met with Samphan to hear about his situation as a prisoner.

“According to the working group, Khieu Samphan's health condition is normal, for his age. He can eat, he can move, with his personal caregiver, doctors and prison officers paying attention to him,” said CHRC deputy director Chin Malin on March 26.

The CHRC said the team had been sent by its president Keo Remy to inspect the situation, led by its deputy director-general

Chou Heng.

The post noted that the CHRC team inspects the human rights situation in prisons throughout Cambodia on a regular basis as it is one of its main missions to protect and improve human rights for the incarcerated. The team also brought along eight different essential medicines for use by ailing inmates on this visit.

In September 2022, the ECCC's Supreme Court Chamber upheld the ruling sentencing Samphan to life imprisonment without any possibility of parole. The decision was final and his case concluded the active prosecutorial mission of the hybrid tribunal.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal

Rights activists slam US report's claims about Jamaat (Dhaka Tribune) March 25, 2023

Antiwar crimes campaigners and rights activists have criticized the latest US human rights report on Bangladesh that advocated for the "freedom of assembly" of Jamaat-e-Islami – which strongly opposed the independence of Bangladesh and with the Pakistan army committed crimes against humanity during the Liberation War.

According to the US State Department report: "Leaders and members of Jamaat-e-Islami (Jamaat), the largest Muslim political party in the country, could not exercise their constitutional freedoms of speech and assembly because of harassment by law enforcement authorities. Jamaat was deregistered as a political party by the government, prohibiting candidates from seeking office under the Jamaat name."

"This report concerns Jamaat-e-Islami (Jamaat) Bangladesh, a political party which has the proven record of collaborating with the Pakistani Military junta in 1971 in the acts of genocide, abduction, loot, arson, rape and other kinds of violence against women. It is an established fact that its military wings in the name of Al-Badr and Al-Shams were responsible for the killings of intellectuals between December 10 and 14," noted rights activist Sultana Kamal observed.

"With due respect, I would like to submit that scanning through the media, Pakistani government communications, international reports on Bangladesh genocide of 1971, one cannot miss seeing what was the role of Jamaat during the nine months of massacre of Bangladesh... It was through a process of law that Jamaat was deregistered," she said.

As a freedom fighter, she asked if one can imagine Nazi party being allowed to function in Germany.

Regarding the US report mentioning Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal as "many observers viewed the proceedings as politically motivated," the rights activist who is also a renowned lawyer said: "I have no idea on what basis the report states the war crimes trial in Bangladesh was flawed. Since I have not seen any clear explanation as to why some quarters make such remark about the war crimes trial, I prefer not to comment. However, my experience with the tribunal was that the accused's right to self-defence was fully respected."

Meanwhile, Ekattorer Ghatak Dalal Nirmul Committee – a group demanding the trial of war criminals and advocating for secularism in Bangladesh – has released a statement regarding the US report.

"Jamaat is still engaged in various forms of evil conspiracy against democracy and sovereignty of the country through their sponsored militant, terrorist organizations," the statement reads. "Jamaat is an anti-democratic fascist party which does not obey the constitution. That's why the High Court scrapped its registration, not the government," the Nirmul Committee statement adds.

The statement also cautions that the "untrue" claims about Jamaat in the US report could instigate "fundamentalism and terrorism" led by Jamaat.

Signatories to the statement included Justice Shamsul Huda; former Supreme Court justice AHM Shamsuddin Choudhury Manik; Barrister Shafique Ahmed; Prof Anupam Sen; cultural personality Ramendu Majumdar; noted artists Hashem Khan and Rafiqun Nabi; writer and war crimes researcher Shahriar Kabir; historian Prof Muntassir Mamoon; and writer and

educationist Dr Muhammed Zafar Iqbal.

Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Mancha Writes To UN, Demands Trial Of Pakistan Army For 1971 Crimes (Republic World) By Zaini Majeed

March 26, 2023

Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Mancha, a non-registered organization that countered Bangladesh's popular quota reform movement, sent a memorandum to the United Nations (UN) Missions in Dhaka on Saturday, March 25, urging the UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for the trial of the Pakistani Army. Dhaka derides Pakistan for its involvement in the genocide during the Liberation War of Bangladesh in 1971.

Bangladesh has been demanding that the neighbouring Pakistan's Armed Forces formally apologise for the war crimes and brutality wreaked on the Bangladeshi citizens during the partition. "Pakistan desists, overtly or covertly, from engaging with those forces that stood against our freedom struggle," ANI reported the Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Mancha as alleging to the UN. The group demanded that Pakistan's government and its Army must offer an "unconditional apology" to the Prime Minister of Bangladesh, Sheikh Hasina as well as to the people of Bangladesh.

The country, in the memorandum sent to the UN, condemned the brutalities and killings by the Pakistan Army for the assassinations of 15 August 1975 following the killing of liberation leader Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, and the 21st grenade attack, as well as the massacres committed by Pakistan during the 1971 liberation struggle.

As many as 30 lakh civilians lost lives, reminded Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Mancha to the UN in the memorandum, adding that an estimated 2 lakh women were raped and tortured by the Pakistani Army. "Pakistan's ISI was directly involved in 'Bangabandhu' Sheikh Mujibur Rahman's killing," alleged Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Mancha.

According to the Bangladesh Muktiyoddha Mancha, Pakistan "patronised and supplied" grenades to BNP-Jamaat-Huji who assassinated Bangabandhu's daughter Shiekh Hasina on August 21 2004. "Some Awami League leaders created human protection to save the life of Sheikh Hasina. Finally, Sheikh Hasina was saved but 24 Awami League leaders were killed due to grenades attack," the memorandum further read, slamming Pakistan's Army. The group reiterated that the neighbouring Islamabad cannot continue to avoid accountability for the killings and massacre during Bangladesh's Liberation War. They went on to warn and threaten Pakistan, saying that it needed to halt sponsoring terrorism in Bangladesh. The group also iterated that Bangladesh would cut all diplomatic relations with Pakistan should it fail to tender an apology and take responsibility for the genocide.

As Pakistan's former President General Pervez Musharraf passed away aged 79 in exile last month, Bangladesh renewed its demands for a long overdue apology from Pakistan for the 1971 genocide, killings, and atrocities against the Bangladeshis. Dhaka has been demanding that Islamabad must immediately accept accountability for the brutal massacre of the Bangladeshis, and apologize for the alleged crimes during the Liberation War. Bangladesh's Foreign Minister Dr AK Abdul Momen said Bangladesh wants Pakistan to "seek apology publicly with a formal announcement" for the atrocities committed in 1971.

World silent on efforts by zealots to ethnically cleanse Hindus in Bangladesh (Sunday Guardian) By Shantanu

Guha Ray

April 1, 2023

NEW DELHI: Demand is mounting across the world for recognition of Hindus killed in genocide of 1971 in East Pakistan. Approximately, three million people were killed, the majority of them Hindus. The murders were carried out by the Pakistan military, and those responsible were left unpunished as a consequence of the 1972 Shimla Accord between Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Z.A. Bhutto.

The genocide is a fact, claim Hindu activists in India and abroad, which has remained buried for long. Over two million Hindus were slaughtered by soldiers of the Pakistan army. And this, claim the activists, has yet to get recognition from global bodies like the United Nations. There have been multiple attempts for the United Nations to recognise the genocide of Bangladeshis.

The issue of brutal slaughter of Hindus was not highlighted during the recent independence day celebrations, which recognises the cost of freedom and suffering and deaths of millions, including of Bangladeshi Hindus. The independence day of Bangladesh is celebrated on 26 March as a national holiday, commemorating the country's declaration of independence from Pakistan in the early hours of 25 March 1971.

India's help to stop the genocide of the population of East Pakistan is well documented by global historians. Indian Prime

Minister Indira Gandhi—as early as 28 April 1971—asked Gen Sam Manekshaw, chairman of the chiefs of the staff committee to go into East Pakistan. Dismay in New Delhi at the genocide carried out by Islamabad led to India’s decision to intervene in the civil war and support the creation of a separate state for ethnic Bengalis by supporting the Mukti Bahini. The rest of the world remained a mute spectator, while the US and China supported the forces carrying out the genocide.

More than five decades later, historians claim things have not changed enough in Bangladesh, and that the issue of ethnic cleansing of Hindus is a persistent problem.

“Bangladesh is demanding recognition of the Bangladesh Genocide of 1971, an attempt to hold the Pakistani army accountable for its past cruelties and casualties. But the Bangladesh government must remember over 20 lakh Hindus were killed by soldiers of the Pakistan army,” Dhaka-based advocate Rabindra Ghosh told this reporter.

“And along with that, the issue of ethnic cleansing of Hindus in Bangladesh needs to be highlighted internationally. The time has come for India to react,” says Ghosh.

In the last one week, Hindus in Bangladesh and across the world have formed human chains to protest against atrocities on their community in Bangladesh, crimes ranging from sexual assaults, abduction, suicide bombings to forced conversion and land grabbing.

In February this year, unidentified people vandalised idols of Hindu gods and goddesses at 14 temples in Muslim-majority north western Thakurgaon district. Thakurgaon’s deputy commissioner, Md Mahbubur Rahman was quoted by the London-based Independent as saying the vandalism of temples were “heinous acts” and those carrying out the attacks wanted to create communal unrest.

The Harvard International Review said in a report that the genocide has had a significant impact on Bangladesh at large. “While the Bangladesh Genocide of 1971 is in the past, its effects still resonate in the present. Genocide in Bangladesh is a persistent problem. An urgency for recognition also necessitates an all encompassing awareness—both of the past and the present,” said the magazine in the report in its February 2023 edition.

What is alarming is that intracountry religious genocide of Hindus persists as the population of Hindu Bangladeshis continues to decline dramatically.

Consider the figures. While the percentage was approximately 20 in 1971, only 8.9% of the current Bangladeshi population consists of Hindus, according to the India Times. Reports in international journals say perpetrators are those who endorse Islamic extremism, many of whom even engage in domestic terrorism.

The Hindu American Foundation said in a report that 11.3 million Hindus have fled Bangladesh due to religious persecution and intolerance between 1964 and 2013. An additional 230,000 continue leaving annually, furthering the Hindu Bangladeshi diaspora.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

War Crimes Investigation in Myanmar

Children among 8 killed in Myanmar military air strike (Reuters) March 31, 2023

At least eight civilians including children were killed in an air strike on a village in northwest Myanmar, according to a human rights group, ethnic minority rebels and media, the latest violence as the ruling military battles to consolidate power.

Myanmar has been in turmoil since a coup two years ago, with attacks by ethnic minority armies and a resistance fighters challenging the rule of the military, which has responded with air strikes and heavy weapons, including in civilian areas.

The air strike took place on Thursday, with four bombs dropped on a Khuafu, a village of about 60 households in Chin State, bordering India, according to the Chin Human Rights Organisation (CHRO) and the Chin National Front.

Both groups said two children, ages 3 and 9, were among the dead. Reuters could not independently verify the accounts and a spokesperson for the junta could not be reached on Friday.

Salai Mang Hre Lian of the Chin Human Rights Organisation (CHRO) said there were no resistance fighters based in the village.

"Therefore we can say it is deliberate attack targeted toward civilians," he said. Pictures shared by the CHRO, which could not be verified by Reuters, showed damaged houses and the bodies of two children in coffins made from planks of wood.

News outlets Myanmar Now, the Irrawaddy and BBC Burmese reported 10 deaths from the incident, with women and children among those.

A spokesperson for the Chin National Front (CNF) told Reuters 10 people were killed and 20 were wounded, adding there had been no fighting in the area in the past 20 days.

The military has denied international allegations it has committed atrocities against civilians and says it is fighting "terrorists" determined to destabilise the country.

At least 1.2 million people have been displaced by violence, the United Nations says. Coup leader Min Aung Hlaing on Monday vowed before a huge military parade on Monday to destroy the armed resistance groups and urged foreign countries to support his efforts to restore democracy, including the holding of an election.

Since coup, nearly 450 civilians killed in Myanmar's eastern Kayah state (Radio Free Asia) April 4, 2023

Civilians are being killed at an alarming rate in Myanmar's civil war, dying in airstrikes, artillery shelling and while being held in detention, data released from an armed ethnic group fighting the junta showed.

In the eastern state of Kayah, which borders northern Thailand, some 447 civilians have been killed since the military took control of the country in a coup two years ago, according to the Progressive Karenni People's Force.

About two-thirds of them were killed after being captured by troops, while the rest died while fleeing conflict, said an official with the group who spoke to Radio Free Asia on condition of anonymity citing security concerns.

"The reason why civilians were killed is because they were hit by the junta's ... artillery fire," he said. "Another reason is the military junta's airstrikes targeting civilians."

"Some were killed by the military forces after they arrested them, and others died because of insufficient medicine to cure them," he said.

Across the country, some 3,206 civilians have been killed by the junta during the same period, according to Thailand's Assistance Association for Political Prisoners (Burma).

Fighting has been fierce in the region since the February 2021 coup. The Burmese army has clashed with the ethnic Karenni Army and the Karenni Nationalities Defense Force as many as 650 times, he said.

War crimes

Junta forces have increasingly ignored the rules of war and committed atrocities that amount to war crimes, said Banyar, director of the Karenni Human Rights Organization.

"We are witnessing the military council openly committing war crimes and crimes against humanity," he said. "The civilian death rate has increased because the junta is committing crimes against innocent civilians instead of protecting them."

The Progressive Karenni People's Force said it is compiling a list of rights violations committed by the military and will submit it to international rights groups as part of a bid to hold the junta accountable.

In addition to civilian deaths, the group said that at least 252 resistance fighters and 1,883 junta soldiers had been killed during the battles, although RFA could not independently confirm the claim.

Calls by RFA to Aung Win Oo, the junta's social affairs minister and Kayah state spokesman, went unanswered Monday.

Just last Monday, on Armed Forces Day, junta chief Sr. Gen. Min Aung Hlaing vowed to "crush" ethnic armed groups supporting the People's Defense Forces and the shadow National Unity Government.

Meanwhile the fighting has driven around 200,000 refugees from their homes in Kayah state since the coup, the Karenni Human Rights Organization said.

The displaced are facing food shortages, and that in some cases, camps don't have access to clean water, leading to diarrhea and other water-borne viruses, said Phu Maw, a volunteer providing medical assistance to refugees in Kayah state.

Most of the refugees are suffering from mental health issues, she said.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

AMERICAS

North & Central America

[\[back to contents\]](#)

South America

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Venezuela

[\[back to contents\]](#)

TOPICS

Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Seychelles' Truth and Reconciliation Body to Complete Mandate End of March (All Africa) March 22, 2023

Seychelles' Truth, Reconciliation and National Unity Commission (TRNUC) will complete its mandate on March 31st in conformity with the second extension granted at the end of last year, said the Commission in a press statement on Thursday.

The Commission said that on that date, all 247 case determinations that had not been filed before President Wavel Ramkalawan in August 2022, will be handed over by the TRNUC, thus completing the final report of the Commission.

TRNUC anticipates that as per Section 10(4) of the TRNUC Act, "the President shall make the complete final report public and lay a copy of it before the National Assembly within one month of receiving it."

Last year, TRNUC handed over to the President the completed volumes of its final report as well as part of the third volume of case determinations, namely 124 of the 371 individual complaints filed before the Commission.

The TRNUC was established in 2018 to work on settling past political divisions and grievances that were a result of the coup d'état in Seychelles on June 5, 1977. It had a three-year mandate which was expected to end in August 2022.

As the Commission was unable to complete its mandate, it was granted an initial extension by the National Assembly until December 2022. The government was informed in November 2022, that considerable investigative challenges meant that the Commission would not be unable to complete all of its determinations under the extension granted.

The Commission said it "hopes that its recommendation for the establishment of a successor body to implement reparations in accordance with the Commission's victims-led Reparations Policy adopted in accordance with Section 3(7) (e) (i) of the TRNUC Act, will be implemented with the support of all Government authorities."

It also notes in that regard that it has also received recently a number of requests from complainants for reconsideration of their determinations and that "given the end of the mandate of the Commission, these requests will be handed to the successor body, to be established by the government, for its consideration."

TRNUC says it still needs to complete other remaining residual functions which include transcription, translation and making publicly accessible the records of the Commission.

TRNUC expressed its gratitude to the complainants, witnesses and suspects that cooperated with the Commission in the implementation of its challenging mandate.

The chairperson, Gabrielle McIntyre, also acknowledged the dedication, commitment, and impartiality of the National Commissioners and commended their efforts undertaken for the benefit of all Seychellois.

TRNUC hopes that its "contributions towards revealing and seeking to understand the past will ensure that the human rights violations do not recur, as well as facilitate a broad acceptance of that past. It is that broad acceptance that has the potential to lay the foundation for the building of a better future for all Seychellois."

[\[back to contents\]](#)

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Piracy

Piracy Attacks in GoGSponsored by High-Profile Personalities, Experts Reveal (The Guardian) By Adaku Onyenucheya
April 5, 2023

Anti-piracy security experts have said the unending attacks in the Gulf of Guinea (GoG) are a political business sponsored by high network personalities, leveraging on the unemployment rate of trained youths.

According to them, governments in the region are frustrating efforts at combatting and eliminating piracy to the nearest minimum, as they have refused to deploy technologies such as, a central control room and the coastguard to complete the efforts of naval presence on waters.

This was made known during an interview programme on News Central, tagged: “Maritime Security in the Gulf of Guinea,” following the recent attack on a Danish-owned Liberian-flagged oil and chemical tanker ship about 140 miles west of Congo’s Port Pointe-Noire late last month.

Recall that the International Maritime Bureau’s Piracy Reporting Centre (IMB PRC) had warned that the Gulf of Guinea is still dangerous despite the recent positive piracy reduction trend achieved by both local and foreign naval operations.

The Secretary-General of the Merchant Seafarers Association of Nigeria, Captain Alfred Oniye, said piracy in the Gulf of Guinea is an organised crime and a political business perpetrated by high-profile personalities using unemployed professionals.

The United States certified anti-piracy security expert, while recounting his experience in combating the menace in the region, alleged that 90 per cent of pirates are trained professionals without jobs, who are hired and equipped by high-profile personalities to carry out the crime on ships in the region.

He said it is unfortunate that after arresting the pirates, there are no investigations to find out their sponsors, the means of supply of the sophisticated weapons they use and the market they take the stolen goods to.

“They can’t operate in the Gulf of Guinea without some security agencies being involved, because they must create demand for their supply.

“Nobody ever bother to find out where the pirates get those sophisticated weapons they use in the attacks, the dealers, the country of supply etc? These are questions to ask. To solve a problem, you need to get to the root cause,” he said.

Oniye, who is also the Head of the Trident Group America, further accused governments in the Gulf of Guinea of frustrating the deployment of a coastguard and central control room, which the US and other countries have deployed to tackle the menace on their waters and regions.

He said African countries find it difficult to have a coastguard that will take care of their entire backwater and complement the effort of the defence Navy in the Gulf of Guinea.

He said maritime security has advanced with the use of a central control room in which the radar is used to see everything that is happening within the Gulf of

Oniye also said maritime security has gone beyond putting gunboats on the sea and patrolling, adding that with the advanced modern technology, surveillance and monitoring can be done in the comfort of one’s home.

Oniye commended the Chief of the Naval Staff, Vice Admiral, Awwal Zubairu Gambo, for the Nigerian Navy operations in the region, which has led to the delisting of Nigeria from the piracy red list of the International Maritime Bureau (IMB).

He said the CNS’s approach in tackling the issue has yielded positive results on Nigeria waters, as seen in the recent data by the International Maritime Bureau’s Piracy Reporting Centre (IMB PRC), which showed zero piracy incident recorded in Nigeria in 2022.

Oniye also said the role of Nigerian Navy in securing the nation’s maritime domain has also led to the removal of war insurance premium paid by ships arriving the country to foster maritime commerce and trade.

The Chief Executive Officer, Regitt Consulting Services Limited, United States of America (USA), Dr. Ignatius Uche, emphasised the use of technology in policing GoG.

He called for the integration of the existing technologies deployed by the Nigerian Navy, Nigerian Ports Authority (NPA) and Nigerian Maritime Administration and Safety Agency (NIMASA) as Command, Control to mitigate the menace in the region.

The security expert also called for holistic collaboration of the agencies, saying some will not allow the solutions deployed to be effective, as they feel it is their inalienable constitutional right to protect the waters alone.

“There should be the establishment of an effective and functional joint task force that will show their presence at sea 24/7 to be able to deal with all these teething challenges within the Gulf of Guinea.

“If we can integrate and harmonise all the security forces under one umbrella to work towards the security of this nation’s territorial waters, that will go a long way in addressing this problem,” he said.

Uche commended the various operations ongoing in the region, noting that it has helped in reducing this threat as seen in the international data.

He said to sustain the achievement, countries in GoG need to sustain these operations, build capacity, train and retrain personnel as well as increase their allowances because this is a risky business.

“No amount of money will be too much to encourage and empower this personnel that put their lives at risk daily in securing these waters.

Uche also called on shipping companies and operators to look inwards and do thorough background checks on all their seafarers, as an investigation revealed that seafarers stage their kidnap to make money.

The security expert further stressed the need to address weak governance and legislation as well as punishment when the pirates are caught.

“To what extent are we implementing the legal system and framework? We need to strengthen our judicial institutions to ensure that whoever is caught should be dealt with following the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS). When we keep doing that, you will notice a decline in the pirate trend,” he said.

He added if the issue is not addressed, the country’s compliance status will be questioned by the international community while shipping companies will increase insurance.

According to him, the multiplier effect is the rise in the cost of living, people being impoverished, low standard of living and decline in Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

Search goes on for oil tanker crew held hostage by pirates in West Africa Hijacking (The National News) By Ramola Talwar Badam April 5, 2023

Six sailors held hostage by pirates who attacked a Danish tanker remain missing close to two weeks after a hijacking in West Africa.

The Danish company that owns the oil tanker Monjasa Reformer told The National that the sole focus was to secure the safe return of the crew.

The hostage taking has raised concerns about a revival of piracy that had witnessed a brief lull over the past year.

Pirates attacked and boarded the Liberian-flagged vessel on March 25 when it was south-west of Congo’s Pointe Noir port.

The recent kidnapping of seafarers in the Gulf of Guinea is a sobering reminder that this region is still plagued by piracy.

The tanker had 16 crew of different nationalities on board, according to the French Navy who responded to the distress call and conducted a search in the north-east of the Gulf of Guinea.

Five days after the attack, on March 30, a navy patrol spotted the tanker that was abandoned by the pirates with some crew on board off the small island of Sao Tome and Principe.

Rescued crew in good health.

“The rescued crew members are all in good health and safely located in a secure environment and receiving proper attention following these dreadful events,” said Thorstein Andreasen, communications director for Monjasa.

The company has declined to specify the nationalities of the crew or provide further details, citing security concerns.

Mr. Andreasen said everything possible was being done to reunite the missing crew with their families.

“Our thoughts are with the crew members still missing and their families during this stressful period,” the company spokesman said.

“Monjasa will continue working closely with the local authorities to support our seafarers safe return to their families.”

No damage was reported to the ship or the cargo of marine gas oil and sulphur fuel oil products it was carrying.

The crew had alerted the management that pirates had boarded the vessel on the night of March 25.

All sailors took refuge in the citadel, a designated safe area within a ship, in keeping with anti-piracy emergency protocols.

The French Navy's aerial drone located the vessel on March 30 and also recorded the presence of a pirate boat alongside the ship.

When the naval patrol vessel began approaching the ship, another reconnaissance flight showed the pirate ship was no longer alongside the tanker.

"The crew still on board indicates that six of its members were kidnapped by pirates," the navy said.

The French team, along with a nurse and doctor, were sent on board the Monjasa Reformer, working in co-operation with Nigerian authorities.

The medics treated three minor injuries and the vessel was escorted to the port of Lome by Nigerian patrol vessels.

The French Navy deploys one or two vessels almost permanently in the Gulf of Guinea as part of Operation Corymbe to help fight against pirates in West Africa.

Perils of piracy

The Gulf of Guinea remains a dangerous spot and the abduction has rekindled fears of kidnapping for ransom.

Danish shippers said the problems of piracy in West Africa are far from solved.

"The recent kidnapping of seafarers in the Gulf of Guinea is a sobering reminder that this region is still plagued by piracy," said Anne Steffensen, chief executive of Danish Shipping that oversees more than 90 ship owners and offshore companies.

"Our hearts go out to the families of the kidnapped seafarers who are left with the uncertainty of their loved ones' safety.

"This tragic incident highlights the continuing problem of piracy in the Gulf of Guinea, even during periods with fewer attacks.

"We are working closely with the shipping company to ensure that everything possible is being done to secure the safe release of the hostages."

The United Nations Security Council last year passed a resolution condemning piracy and expressed concern over the "grave and persistent threat" posed in the Gulf of Guinea.

The UN said while there was a decline in the incidents of armed robbery in the region, more needed to be done to stamp out piracy.

The total number of pirate attacks in the Gulf of Guinea was 19, down from 35 in 2021, according to the International Maritime Bureau.

There were 115 piracy attacks and armed robbery globally against ships last year compared to 132 in 2021, according to the IMB's annual report.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Gender-Based Violence

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Commentary and Perspectives

Welcoming Benjamin Netanyahu to No 10 is an insult to British Palestinians like me (The Guardian) By Sara Husseini

March 26, 2023

The Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, might have been hoping for some brief respite from the tumult back home during his flying visit to London. Instead, in addition to his meeting with Rishi Sunak and other officials, the Likud leader was met with protests from human rights activists, including a protest by Amnesty International, a Palestine solidarity demonstration outside No 10 and another by the British Jewish group Na'amod.

Such protests are well justified. Since the new government was sworn in, as reported by international governments, lawyers and human rights groups, Israel has furthered “annexation” of occupied land and advanced construction in illegal settlements. In 2023 so far, 75 Palestinians have been killed by Israeli forces (as of 13 March); last year, at least 231 Palestinians were killed in the occupied West Bank and East Jerusalem, including nearly 40 children.

Moreover, these developments have not come out of the blue; Netanyahu heads a regime built over decades, and under various coalitions, that systematically privileges Jewish Israelis over Palestinians across all of the territory under its control – a regime that many in British politics have long condemned for its colonisation and occupation of Palestinian land.

This amounts to apartheid under international law, as many Palestinian, Israeli and international human rights groups agree. Yet rather than treating the Israeli government accordingly, the UK government has signed a “roadmap for UK-Israeli bilateral relations”, committing to various aspects of economic and state partnership.

Shamefully, the agreement also doubled down on the UK’s opposition to an international court of justice advisory opinion on the policies and practices of Israel in the occupied Palestinian territory, calling the ICJ’s decision “inappropriate”. The UK pledges to “tackle the singling out of Israel in the human rights council”, it adds – seemingly by singling out Israel and making the state exempt from international law.

Rishi Sunak can’t afford to ignore Israel’s collapsing democracy – it’s everyone’s problem

It is true that there have been some tame expressions of concern from Sunak’s government about the current Israeli government, and the foreign secretary, James Cleverly, has confirmed that the UK government is not engaging with the Israeli minister of national security, Itamar Ben-Gvir, a far-right activist within the coalition. Cleverly has also reiterated the UK’s position that Israeli settlements are “illegal under international law”.

Contrast the mealy mouthed or boilerplate criticism offered with respect to Israel with the UK’s response to Russia – the UK supported the international criminal court’s issuance of a warrant for Vladimir Putin’s arrest for the war crime of “unlawful deportation” and “unlawful transfer of population from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation”.

Cleverly welcomed this development, noting the British government’s respect for the “judgment” and “independence” of the court and reiterating the Ukrainians’ right to “get their country back”. By contrast, in 2021, the UK government actively opposed any ICC investigation into Israeli actions.

Meanwhile, the UK government’s “anti-boycott” bill is due to be tabled imminently and expected to prohibit public bodies, such as local councils and universities, from making investment and procurement decisions that are not in line with UK foreign policy. A move designed to “prevent organisations, including local councils, from boycotting countries such as Israel” now threatens to undermine the ability to peacefully protest over human rights abuses and unethical practices across the board. Thus, we find ourselves in the position where a UK government is rewarding an apartheid regime with strengthened bilateral ties, and undermining efforts to hold it to account.

It has long been the case that UK policy towards Israel has been at odds with a supposed commitment to a rules-based order and respect for human rights; Netanyahu’s ultra-right government appears to be throwing such inconsistency into sharp relief.

While the current UK government appears wholly unconcerned by the gaping disparity between its purported foreign policy principles and Israeli crimes, it would be prudent for British policymakers across the political spectrum to take a longer view. As it stands, the UK position is actively contributing to a worsening of the situation on the ground. Acting as an apologist for a serial law violator destroys the UK’s credibility as a responsible international actor and insults the intelligence of the British people.

As British Palestinians, we are being let down twice over. And for Palestinians back in Palestine, the consequences of this UK position are far, far worse. In 2019, Amnesty International reported: “In addition to being violations of international

humanitarian law, key acts required for the establishment of settlements amount to war crimes under the Rome statute of the international criminal court.” Why do the Ukrainian victims of war crimes deserve urgent accountability and legal redress, but Palestinian victims do not? Why, when it comes to Palestine, is the clarity that peace only comes through freedom and self-determination completely absent?

Just as Putin is rightly held accountable for crimes committed by Russian forces, so too should Netanyahu be held accountable for crimes committed by Israeli forces and authorities. Indeed, the crimes in Israel’s case are copiously documented and have been going on for decades under every single Israeli prime minister.

If we want to be on the right side of history, the Israeli leadership should be persona non grata until the end of apartheid; the only European trip Netanyahu should be making is to The Hague.

Indonesia’s ASEAN Leadership Tested with Myanmar (Human Rights Watch) By Shayna Bauchner and Andreas Harsono
March 31, 2023

Two years ago, following Myanmar’s military coup on February 1, 2021, Indonesia called an emergency summit of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in Jakarta. “The development of the situation in Myanmar is unacceptable and must not continue,” President Joko Widodo announced. On April 24, 2021, the nine ASEAN leaders and Myanmar junta chief, Sr. Gen. Min Aung Hlaing, committed to a five-point consensus intended to chart a path toward dialogue and de-escalation of the crisis.

Within days, the junta repudiated the agreement, going on to unleash a reign of atrocities against the Myanmar people that continues today, massacring, torturing, and starving its perceived opposition.

Meanwhile, the international community has put ASEAN in the driver’s seat, endlessly reiterating, as in the December UN Security Council resolution on Myanmar, “its full support for ASEAN’s central role in facilitating a peaceful solution.” But with no clear tools or leverage to move forward, ASEAN has been left effectively holding the bag for Myanmar’s descent toward becoming a failed state.

“Indonesia is deeply concerned by the military’s lack of commitment to implement the Five-Points Consensus,” Foreign Minister Retno Marsudi told the UN General Assembly in September 2022, following the junta’s execution of four pro-democracy activists. The next month, she reported that the situation was “deteriorating and worsening.”

The foreign minister’s frankness suggested Indonesia’s chairmanship of ASEAN in 2023 would bring about a stronger regional response, following Cambodia’s self-admitted foundering last year.

But as it wraps up its first quarter as ASEAN chair, Indonesia has fallen short.

The chair’s statement at the February Foreign Ministers’ Retreat contained only meek language on Myanmar, toothlessly urging the junta to implement the five-point consensus, which called for an immediate end to violence and constructive dialogue, among other points. Jakarta has offered no clarity on what action will be taken against a member that has grievously violated not only the joint agreement, but the binding ASEAN Charter, which enshrines the principles of democracy, rule of law, and human rights.

Behind closed doors, Marsudi reportedly presented a plan to make progress on the consensus at a UN Security Council briefing in March, an outcome of the November 2022 ASEAN Leaders Summit that called for “an implementation plan that outlines concrete, practical and measurable indicators with specific timeline to support the Five-Point Consensus.”

But putting any meaningful plan into effect will require a timeline with tangible consequences for the junta’s violations, which should include the threat of suspending Myanmar under article 20 of the ASEAN Charter, covering noncompliance and serious breaches of the Charter. Indonesia should formalize the proposal made by Jokowi at the November summit to expand the ban on junta representatives at ASEAN meetings.

Rather than appointing an individual as special envoy to Myanmar, like the previous two chairs, Indonesia has established a special envoy’s office headed by Foreign Minister Marsudi, working alongside longtime diplomat Ngurah Swajaya. The office has been operating “in a low key manner,” a spokesperson told Frontier Myanmar. “Not all diplomatic activities need to be disclosed to the public.” Reported plans for a military envoy have not yet materialized.

Grappling with the Myanmar junta’s intransigence has exposed fault lines within the regional bloc. Indonesia and Malaysia, often alongside Singapore and the Philippines, have favored a more vocal approach to Myanmar that has been stymied by

Thailand and Cambodia's expressed reluctance to isolate the junta. The result is a lowest common denominator strategy presented under the guise of "consensus."

Marsudi reported that at their February meeting, the foreign ministers "reiterated the united approach" on Myanmar – a misguided cover falsely equating a diversified approach with weakness.

In December, Thailand hosted an "informal" meeting on the crisis with junta officials, attended by Cambodia, Laos, and Vietnam, which the other ASEAN members sat out. An opaque Thai-led "1.5 track dialogue" with Laos, Bangladesh, India, and junta representatives followed in mid-March. If Bangkok has no qualms charting its own course without the sign-off of all ASEAN members, why should Indonesia handcuff itself as chair to protect a "consensus" approach that's serving no one?

Indonesia should instead be capitalizing on its leadership role by helping build a coalition of concerned governments, including regional powers as well as Western countries that have hidden behind "ASEAN centrality," to create pressure that's layered yet complementary. Gaining buy-in from many if not all ASEAN states as well as Japan and South Korea would strengthen both diplomatic and punitive actions.

Jakarta should encourage other governments to toughen sanctions on the junta's revenues – first and foremost from oil and gas – and to enhance their enforcement of existing measures. It should welcome more concrete action by the Security Council, with steps toward a resolution imposing a global arms embargo, targeted sanctions against the military, and a referral of the situation to the International Criminal Court. Indonesia cannot present itself as a broker or envoy between junta authorities and the outside world unless the punitive actions that the world is imposing are serious enough to get the junta's attention.

"The interests of the Myanmar people must always be the priority," Jokowi said at the emergency summit in Jakarta two years ago.

But the junta's generals serve neither the country nor its people. Indonesia should be engaging, formally and consistently, with those who do – Myanmar civil society activists and the opposition National Unity Government, among others. Local groups are also key for the ASEAN Coordinating Centre for Humanitarian Assistance (AHA Centre) to deliver aid effectively, one of the tasks of the five-point consensus, rather than relying on junta authorities who have misused and weaponized humanitarian assistance.

"The criticisms shouldn't be aimed at ASEAN," Marsudi said in November. "They should be aimed at the junta.... We did our part."

Certainly, the junta is directly responsible for the crimes against humanity and war crimes it's committing across the country.

But for the millions of people brutally oppressed by the junta, ASEAN has not done its part. Not when there is so much more that Jakarta could be doing, and so much more that needs to be done.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

Aiding and Abetting

[\[back to contents\]](#)

WORTH READING

The Shadow of Success: How International Criminal Law Has Come to Shape the Battlefield
Gabriella Blum
April 3, 2023

The rise of international criminal law (ICL) has undoubtedly contributed to the development and enforcement of international humanitarian law (IHL). Yet, there are also important and oft-overlooked ways in which it has done the opposite. By labeling certain violations of the laws of war as “criminal” and setting up dedicated mechanisms for prosecution and punishment of offenders, the content, practice, and logic of ICL are displacing those of IHL. With its doctrinal precision, elaborate institutions, and the seemingly irresistible claim of political and moral priority, ICL is overshadowing the more diffuse, less institutionalized, and more difficult to enforce IHL.

But if ICL becomes the dominant lens through which battlefield activity is measured, it is not merely intellectually unsatisfying; it poses a serious risk to the attainment of the very same humanitarian values that ICL seeks to protect. Consider the fact that in many wars fought today, the majority of civilian deaths and injuries does not result from acts that could be classified as war crimes, but from the more “mundane” choices of means and methods of warfare that at most would lend themselves to IHL scrutiny.

Rather than diminishing the importance of ICL, this essay calls for more attention to the ways in which ICL is impacting IHL as well as for a stronger commitment by states to the application and enforcement of IHL for its own sake.

[\[back to contents\]](#)

War Crimes Prosecution Watch Staff

Founder/Advisor
Dean Michael P. Scharf

Faculty Advisor
Jim Johnson

Editor-in-Chief
Matthew Koutsky

Managing Editors
Spencer Luckwitz
Harper Fox

Technical Editor-in-Chief
Alexa Stovsky

Technical Editors
Matthew Koutsky
Alexa Stovsky
Kayla Briskey
Emory Bado

Emerging Issues Advisor
Judge Rosemelle Mutoka
Contact: warcrimewatch@pilpg.org

Africa

Libya

Kelsey Tschanen, Associate Editor

Madison Turk, Senior Editor

**Central African Republic
Kelsey Tschanen, Associate Editor**

Madison Turk, Senior Editor

**Sudan & South Sudan
Chad Weisman, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Democratic Republic of the Congo
Chad Weisman, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast)
Nicholas Vanarthos, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Lake Chad Region
Nicholas Vanarthos, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Mali
Emory bado, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Liberia
Emory Bado, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Uganda
Margaret Crookston, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Kenya
Margaret Crookston, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Rwanda (International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda)
Margaret Crookston, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

**Somalia
Margaret Crookston, Associate Editor
Madison Turk, Senior Editor**

Europe

**Court of Bosnia and Herzegovina, War Crimes Section
Madison Turk, Associate Editor
Kayla Briskey, Senior Editor**

**International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia
Nicholas Vanarthos, Associate Editor
Kayla Briskey, Senior Editor**

Domestic Prosecutions in the Former Yugoslavia
Madison Turk, Associate Editor
Kayla Briskey, Senior Editor

Turkey
Anna Buczek, Associate Editor
Kayla Briskey, Senior Editor

Kosovo Specialist Chambers
Kayla Briskey, Senior Editor

Azerbaijan
Nicholas Vanarthos, Associate Editor
Kayla Briskey, Senior Editor

Russia
Harper Fox, Associate Editor
Kayla Briskey, Senior Editor

Middle-East

Iraq
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

Syria
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

Yemen
Harper Fox, Associate Editor
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

Special Tribunal for Lebanon
Annalie Buscarino, Associate Editor
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

Israel and Palestine
Katherine McBane, Associate Editor
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

Gulf Region
Jessica Chapman, Associate Editor
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

Asia

Afghanistan
Lucas Katz, Associate Editor
Estefania Sixto Seijas, Senior Editor

Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia
Anna Buczek, Associate Editor
Estefania Sixto Seijas, Senior Editor

Bangladesh
Anna Buczek, Associate Editor
Estefania Sixto Seijas, Senior Editor

War Crimes Investigations in Myanmar
Lucas Katz, Associate Editor
Estefania Sixto Seijas, Senior Editor

Americas

North and Central America
Sam Rodis, Associate Editor
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

South America
Sam Rodis, Associate Editor
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

Venezuela
Sam Rodis, Associate Editor
Lucas Katz, Senior Editor

Topics

Truth and Reconciliation Commissions
Jessica Chapman, Associate Editor
Matthew Koutsky, Senior Editor

Terrorism
Kayla Briskey, Associate Editor
Matthew Koutsky, Senior Editor

Piracy
Annalie Buscarino, Associate Editor
Matthew Koutsky, Senior Editor

Gender-Based Violence
Katherine McBane, Associate Editor
Matthew Koutsky, Senior Editor

Commentary and Perspectives
Matthew Koutsky, Senior Editor

Aiding and Abetting
Matthew Koutsky, Senior Editor

Worth Reading

Matthew Koutsky, Senior Editor

**War Crimes Prosecution Watch is prepared by the
International Justice Practice of the Public International Law & Policy Group
and the Frederick K. Cox International Law Center of
Case Western Reserve University School of Law
and is made possible by grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York
and the Open Society Institute.**

Grotian Moment: The International War Crimes Trial Blog:
<http://law.case.edu/grotian-moment-blog/>

Frederick K. Cox International Law Center:
<http://law.case.edu/centers/cox/>

Cox Center War Crimes Research Portal:
<http://law.case.edu/war-crimes-research-portal/>



To subscribe or unsubscribe from this newsletter, please email warcimeswatch@pilpg.org.