

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE  
OUTREACH AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE**



**PRESS CLIPPINGS**

**Enclosed are clippings of local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Outreach and Public Affairs Office as at:**

Friday, 18 November 2011

Press clips are produced Monday through Friday.  
Any omission, comment or suggestion, please contact  
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## **The Sierra Leone Peace Museum**

Site of the Special Court for Sierra Leone  
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**17<sup>th</sup> November, 2011**

### **PRESS RELEASE**

## **Special Court and Partners Organize Walk for Peace March**

Supporters of Sierra Leone's new Peace Museum will hold a Sponsored Walk in Freetown next week to draw attention to the Museum, its aims and objectives.

On Saturday, 26 November, members of public institutions, government ministries and departments, civil society groups, non-governmental organizations and UN agencies will set out from two points beginning at 9:00 a.m. One group will start their march at Uppun in the east; the other will start from Lumley Roundabout in the west.

The marchers will converge at the museum, located at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, at 1:00 p.m., where key stakeholders will deliver statements on the museum's goal of promoting peace, justice and human rights, while remembering the victims of the decade-long civil war.

Saturday's Walk is organized by the Peace Museum Project Management Team, consisting of government ministries and departments, the Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone, other public institutions, the Advocacy Movement Network (AMNet), the War victims' Association, UNIPSIL and the Special Court.

The Peace Museum will be an independent national institution and is scheduled to open in 2012 on the site of the Special Court. It will promote peace by helping both present and future generations learn about the war and its causes.

#END

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Concord Times  
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## **UN court convicts former Rwandan mayor of genocide**

The U.N. war crimes tribunal for Rwanda found former mayor Gregoire Ndahimana guilty of genocide and crimes against humanity on Thursday for planning the slaughter of more than 2,000 Tutsi refugees in 1994.

"The chamber ... found Ndahimana guilty of genocide and extermination by aiding and abetting as well as by virtue of his command responsibility over communal police in Kivumu," the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda said in a statement.

Ndahimana, born in 1952, was sentenced to 15 years in prison after the tribunal dismissed an additional charge of complicity in genocide. He

had pleaded not guilty to all charges. The court said the scale of the operation that led to the destruction of the Nyange church and the murder of thousands of Tutsis reflected a broad coordination by local and religious authorities.

"Though this did in no way exonerate the accused, it did, however, suggest that his participation through aiding and abetting may have resulted from duress rather than from extremism or ethnic hatred," the court said.

Nationwide, more than 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were butchered during a 100-day killing spree.

## ICC Chief Calls For Collaboration Between Justice And Development Sectors

**J**udge Sang-Hyun Song of the International Criminal Court stressed Tuesday (Nov. 15) the importance of addressing past atrocities and development challenges in achieving lasting peace in post-conflict societies.

*By Jenny Lei Ravelo*

In his speech at the 2011 Law, Justice and Development Week in Washington, D.C., Judge Song called for development agencies to support justice reforms and justice systems in their quest to prosecute and prevent war crimes and crimes against humanity.

“Any efforts to help a society regain health, wealth and capacity to profit from its own resources must include accountability for past atrocities and strengthening of the rule of law,” he said. In this year's World Development Report, the average cost of civil war is

tantamount to more than 30 years of gross domestic product growth for a midsize developing company. Thus, Judge Song urges the development and justice sectors to collaborate to ensure ongoing peace. He said the collaboration must be structured to achieve long-term stability.

“Lasting peace and prosperity in post-conflict societies can only be achieved if development challenges and justice enforcement are addressed in a coordinated manner,” he said.

*Credit [www.devex.com](http://www.devex.com)*

# The New York Times

Thursday, 17 November 2011

## **In Bangladesh: Reconciliation or Revenge?**

By JOHN CAMMEGH

Over the last 20 years, international criminal justice has developed rapidly, and most people see this as a change for the better. Thanks to the labors, however imperfect, of the International Criminal Court in The Hague, and of ad-hoc tribunals from Sierra Leone to Cambodia, it has been established that politicians and warlords who commit terrible crimes against the vulnerable can no longer count on impunity.

But a trial now starting in Bangladesh risks making a mockery of that principle. Indeed, it serves as a terrible warning of the way in which the ideals of universal justice and accountability can be abused. Facing ill-defined charges of crimes against humanity, which carry the death penalty, are five elderly men who lead the country's Islamist party, Jamaat-e-Islami. (A sixth defendant is a central figure in the Bangladesh National Party, an erstwhile political ally of Jamaat.)

The charges arise from the civil war of 1971 in which the former East Pakistan gained independence as Bangladesh: a savage nine-month conflict in which hundreds of thousands of people died. It is widely accepted that military forces under the command of West Pakistan committed brutal acts of ethnic cleansing, directed at Hindus in particular. But that does not, of course, prove the guilt of a political party, like Jamaat, which opposed independence. To make a considered moral judgement on a conflict that took place 40 years ago, a scrupulously impartial investigation would be needed.

Sadly, the current trial promises to be nothing of the kind. It pretends to be applying universal principles — that is implicit in the name of the court, the Bangladesh International Crimes Tribunal — but in contrast with other recent ad-hoc tribunals, there is no external input, because none has been allowed.

I was one of three British lawyers whose help was sought by the local defense team. I was retained on behalf of Delwar Hossain Sayedee, Jamaat's leading cleric, who goes on trial for his life on Sunday. Although I managed to pay one visit to Dhaka last March, where I was tailed by security operatives, neither I nor any other British lawyer has been allowed to participate in the trial or enter Bangladesh while it is happening.

But from any vantage point, certain dire features of the proceedings are clear. The trial is being held under a revived version of the country's International Crimes (Tribunals) Act of 1973, which was initially presented as South Asia's answer to the Nuremberg trials — only to be set aside in favor of a general amnesty for all participants in the conflict. In its original form, the 1973 act falls far short of international standards. Government investigators have wide-ranging rights to detain and question, suspects lack the usual rights to information and legal advice. The 1973 act has recently been amended in ways that make matters worse.

Sayedee's treatment speaks for itself. When he was first questioned, his attending lawyer was forced to "observe" from a room where he could neither see nor hear anything. The questioners regularly broke off their work to inform journalists of the suspect's supposed "confessions" which were duly sensationalized in the press. When Sayedee was eventually charged, he was again denied access to a lawyer and forced to



enter immediate pleas to a series of grave accusations with little precision over place or time. The 1973 act then allows just three weeks, an absurdly short time, for the defense to prepare its case.

In recent days there have been disturbing reports of defense lawyers and witnesses being harassed. As Human Rights Watch has disclosed, one of Sayedee's main lawyers received a warning to stay away from work, and was told that he might be arrested. Another prominent lawyer and Jamaat supporter faces an arrest warrant in connection with riots in Dhaka in September, even though he was in Europe at the time. Further ominous developments, cited by Human Rights Watch, include the arrest of one key defense witness and the preparation of criminal charges against nine more.

The rules on what sort of evidence is permissible, as laid down by the 1973 act, are at variance with international norms, and with Bangladeshi jurisprudence. Media reports, however biased, are explicitly admitted, with no forensic scrutiny. In the latest alarming development, the court has rejected a petition of recusal against its own chairman, who in 1993 was involved in a contentious enquiry into Jamaat's alleged liability for atrocities.

The Bangladesh government has made some extravagant claims on behalf of the trial. Kamrul Islam, the state minister for law, said in October that the tribunal would be "exemplary for the world community ... working with full independence and complete neutrality." A fair trial would indeed have been a landmark: the court could have set an example to the developing world, showing how to end impunity while also cementing reconciliation.

But the court prosecutor, Rana Dasgupta, seems not to anticipate any real deliberation by the court. "One can say that 2012 is the year of the verdict of the war crimes trial and 2013 the year of verdict execution," he has ominously predicted. If he is proved right, the result will smack not of reconciliation but revenge.

***John Cammegh is a barrister in chambers at 9 Bedford Row, London. He acted as lead defense counsel for Augustine Gbao, overall security commander of the RUF rebel army, at his war crimes trial at the Special Court of Sierra Leone from 2004 to 2006.***