

INTERNATIONAL

UN: Congo, Rwanda prosecute genocide suspects

Special to Sentinel-Voice

UNITED NATIONS — The Security Council called on Congo and Rwanda Monday to prosecute suspects linked to alleged massacres of Rwandan Hutu refugees during Zaire's civil war in 1996-97.

A presidential statement endorsed late Monday by the 15-member council made no mention of suggestions by U.N. human rights investigators that an international tribunal prosecute the crimes if Congo and Rwanda are unable or unwilling to do so.

But the council, apparently aware of this possibility, said it was ready

to consider "additional steps to ensure that the perpetrators of the massacres, other atrocities and violations of international humanitarian law are brought to justice."

It requested that both countries report back to the U.N. chief by Oct. 15 on progress made toward investigating and prosecuting those responsible.

The tribunal recommendation was made in a report by the U.N. human rights team which was pulled from Congo in April because of what the United Nations said was a complete lack of cooperation from the government.

The team was sent in

August to investigate massacres of Rwandan Hutu refugees allegedly carried out by Laurent Kabila's rebel troops during their victorious march across Zaire.

In May 1997, Kabila took power in Zaire and renamed it Congo.

The Rwandan Hutu refugees fled across the border to what was then Zaire to escape punishment for the 1994 Hutu-sponsored massacre of an estimated half-million Tutsis.

During his rebel war last year, Kabila enlisted the support of Rwandan Tutsi soldiers - among others - who are believed to have slaughtered the Hutu

refugees.

Though admittedly incomplete because of the aborted mission, the U.N. report gave evidence of Rwandan involvement in the massacres of hundreds of unarmed civilians by troops loyal to Kabila.

It also documented Congolese government attempts to cover up the massacres by removing bodies from a mass grave in the northwestern Congolese town of Mbandaka.

Congo strongly rejected the findings of the report, raising questions about whether local courts had the ability or the political will to prosecute the crimes.

Mandela vows to solve politically motivated murders

Special to Sentinel-Voice

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — President Nelson Mandela vowed Sunday to combat "sinister" elements in the security forces amid allegations that police may be involved in political violence that has left 10 people dead this weekend.

Mandela, shaken after seeing the bodies of some of the people killed this weekend in Richmond, told a crowd at a funeral in the eastern town's stadium that the murderers would be caught. Tensions were high, and a scuffle had broken out earlier when police tried to disarm men with spears and sticks outside the stadium.

Saturday's funeral was for three of eight people, including Richmond's deputy mayor, who were gunned down July 3 in a tavern as they watched World Cup soccer on television.

Witnesses have reported seeing police vehicles nearby at the time of some of the killings in Richmond. One witness said he saw a police car shine a spotlight at a house



"We have been patient in trying to deal with such sinister forces, which are attempting to take us back to the apartheid days. We will no longer treat such forces with kid gloves. We want the world to see how gruesome and ruthless the murderers have been."

— Nelson Mandela

so a killer could find his way at night.

Although apartheid ended with the nation's first all-race elections in 1994 and the police and army are being integrated, a minority of whites long for the days of white rule.

"We have been patient in trying to deal with such sinister forces, which are attempting to take us back to the apartheid days. We will no longer treat such forces with kid gloves," the South African Press Association quoted Mandela as saying.

Five people — four men and a woman — were gunned down at a home on Saturday night in Richmond, a poor town 280 miles southeast of Johannesburg. Five other

people were killed earlier during the weekend.

"We want the world to see how gruesome and ruthless the murderers have been," Mandela said. He described seeing bodies with heads blown apart or with bullet wounds in their stomachs.

"How long is this going to be happening," wailed an elderly woman wearing black mourning clothes.

Safety and Security Minister Sydney Mufamadi met with the local police commander Sunday. No details were released. Mufamadi has reportedly threatened to transfer local police leaders if they don't explain the deteriorating situation.

Richmond is in KwaZulu-

Natal province, where more than 10,000 people were killed in the last decade, many in fighting between supporters of the African National Congress and the rival Inkatha Freedom Party.

That violence has mostly ended, but the new round of killings came after Sifiso Nkabinde was expelled as local ANC chairman because he allegedly was an informer for the apartheid-era security forces. Nkabinde earlier this year was acquitted of charges that he killed 16 people.

He is now the national secretary of the United Democratic Movement, a new party that will contest the 1999 elections. He has denied being behind the killings.

Assistance

(Continued from Page 7)

content could be reexported or used for committing torture or other human rights abuses or in producing biological weapons.

The beneficiaries of the humanitarian aid sent to Cuba in direct flights from the United States must have no links to the Cuban government, must not administer any kind of business concern, and must not hold discriminatory policies that could bias the distribution of the aid.

Coats said the resumption of direct flights would cut the costs of shipping humanitarian aid, which up to now was sent through Canada, Mexico or other Caribbean nations. But he expressed concern over the large number of people in need of assistance in Cuba. "We receive many requests from Cuban-Americans who want to send their families specific medicine. They ask us to help them buy and deliver the medicine, but it is traumatic for us because sometimes it's impossible to do."

Cuban Cardinal Jaime Ortega told the magazine Palabra Nueva, published by the Archdiocese of Havana, that in the past few years the Catholic Church in Cuba received more humanitarian aid from church groups in the United States than from any other country.

Donations channelled through Caritas Cuba have come from the Catholic Aid Service, the Knights of Columbus and the Knights of Malta, among other groups, said Ortega.

The director of the Catholic Aid Service's assistance program in the United States, Thomas Garafalo, recently said his group expected to send \$9 million worth of aid this year, compared to an average of \$4 million in previous years.

The U.S. National Council of Churches, which has organized some 40 trips to Cuba in the past six years to deliver around \$10 million in food and medicine, also announced an increase in humanitarian aid.

WORLD NEWS

U.S. TEAM CONFERS WITH ABUBAKAR AND ABIOLA JUST BEFORE HIS DEATH

LAGOS, Nigeria — A United States delegation led by Under-Secretary of State for political affairs, Thomas Pickering, met in Abuja on Tuesday, July 7 with Nigerian head of state Gen. Abdulsalam Abubakar, as part of continuing efforts to end Nigeria's lingering political crisis and its international isolation. The U.S. delegation also met with Moshood Abiola, who is said to have won Nigeria's annulled 1993 presidential elections. He had been imprisoned on charges of treason since 1994 when he declared himself president. Abiola collapsed and died not long after his meeting with the U.S. team of an apparent cardiac arrest or a pulmonary embolism. There is a call for an independent autopsy. The U.S. visit has been viewed as another sign of a thaw in Abuja's troubled diplomatic relations with Washington over democracy and human rights issues. Following the annulment of Nigeria's 1993 presidential elections, the U.S. imposed wide ranging sanctions, including visa restrictions on government officials and suspension of military assistance to the country. However, their economic relations have remained intact, with Nigeria still one of the largest suppliers of oil to America. The Pickering team's presence came after the high-profile visit to Nigeria of the United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan who announced that Abiola's release was imminent because he had agreed to the military's demand that he denounce his claim to the presidency. He died before publicly confirming this and his death has sparked rioting by Yoruban supporters in Lagos, the commercial capital, and other towns in the southwestern region. Abiola died one day before the end of the 30-day national mourning period for the late leader, General Sani Abacha, who also died of a heart attack.

LEARNING A VERNACULAR COMPULSORY IN ZIMBABWE

HARARE, Zimbabwe (PANA) - Zimbabwe's education, sport and culture minister Gabriel Machinga said that it is the government's policy that the teaching of indigenous languages within the school system should be compulsory. "Every child in primary schools should be exposed to at least one indigenous language and the English language," he said. In most of the country's private schools, Shona and Ndebele languages are optional subjects and only those interested sit for the examinations at the grade seven level. The minister said he had received proposals from groups advocating for Shona, Ndebele and English to be accorded equal status. The issue of developing local languages has been widely debated in the country, which got its independence from Britain in April 1980. Some groups have said Africa would remain backward scientifically, technologically and economically unless schools started using vernacular languages as the medium of instruction instead of foreign ones.

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