

WORLD BRIEFS

POST COMMENTS ON ARCHBISHOP'S EXCOMMUNICATION

Lusaka, Zambia (PANA) - Zambia's independent Post newspaper sees the excommunication of Archbishop Emmanuel Milingo by the Vatican as not a surprise. It believes that Milingo expected his moonie wedding to alter his relationship with the Catholic Church. Milingo's conduct was questionable or unacceptable in a number of respects, it charges, adding that the cleric did things that could have led to his excommunication in the early '80s. It argues that Milingo made "enormous mistakes and unleashed a process that was self-destructive for Catholicism and for himself. If you start a process in which all of a Church's values begin to be destroyed, that process is very dangerous. We would like to see a united Church supporting the legitimate claims of the people of the Third World and of all mankind," the paper says. "There are many things that need to be reformed in the Catholic Church. But we do not think moonie weddings by archbishops is the best way to do it." It warns that "it is right to reform or improve the Catholic Church from outside; nor do we think it is right to promote divisions from outside. We do think, however, that solidarity with mankind's most deeply felt aspirations for a united Catholic Church is politically better for us, and we sincerely hope that the problems within the Church may be solved rationally," it observes. "We agree with the Vatican that Monsignor Milingo had committed a grave error which made it very difficult for him to continue to be considered a bishop of the Catholic Church," it says.

SOUTH AFRICA ASKS FOR NO REPRIEVE FOR EMBASSY BOMBER

Cape Town, South Africa (PANA) - South Africa will not press US authorities to spare the life of Khalfan Khamis Mohamed, convicted Tuesday for involvement in the bombing of two US embassies in East Africa in 1998, justice ministry spokesman Paul Setsetse said Thursday in Cape Town. He said South Africa would maintain the stand even though the Constitutional Court ruled this week that the government had acted illegally by deporting Mohamed to stand trial in the US. Mohamed, Rashed Daoud Al-Owhali, Wadih El-Hage and Mohamed Sadeek Odeh were convicted in a Manhattan federal courtroom Tuesday for their involvement in the 1998 bombings of US embassies in Nairobi and Dar es Salaam. The blasts, which went off almost simultaneously, killed 224 people and wounded thousands of others. However, Setsetse said South Africa respected the fact that the US is a sovereign state and would not take the matter further. The Afrikaner Eenheidsbeweging leader Cassie Aucamp said in a statement that the Constitutional Court's judgment that criminals may not be extradited to countries where they may be sentenced to death, will change South Africa into a safe haven for murderers. Aucamp said the ruling was indicative of a misplaced accent on the rights of the individual as opposed to the rights of the community.

ZIMBABWE SEIZES EXCESS FOREX FROM TRAVELERS

Harare, Zimbabwe (PANA) - Zimbabwe's customs service said Thursday it had seized large amounts of foreign currency being taken out of the country illegally. The head of the Department of Customs and Excise, Ranga Munyaradzi, said thousands of Zimbabwean travelers had been caught trying to take out of the country more than the permitted 500 US dollars and 15,000 Zimbabwe dollars. The crackdown was prompted by reports of widespread capital flight. "We have been stopping a lot of people and we have seized a lot of foreign currency at Harare Airport and in Beitbridge (at the border with South Africa)," he said. "We cannot quantify the amount seized because it's spread countrywide and we don't keep a running record. But people are trying to take money out of the country and we have seized a lot of foreign currency," he added. Zimbabwe is experiencing an acute shortage of foreign currency, which has led to rationing of fuel and other imported commodities, since international donors cut off financial support last year in protest at government policies. Economists say a growing number of Zimbabweans, especially the rich, were taking money out of the country in case the southern African country descends into political chaos next year after presidential elections.

INTERNATIONAL

South Africa Truth Commission closes shop

CAPE TOWN, South Africa (AP) - They came by the thousands: traumatized mothers wanting to know the fate of their children, unapologetic policemen seeking absolution for unspeakable crimes and self-righteous politicians, shunning responsibility for the brutality they presided over.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission, set up following South Africa's first all-race elections in 1994, laid bare the cruelty of the racist apartheid regime and worked to help the country come to terms with its past by granting amnesty to perpetrators willing to tell the whole story behind their crimes.

As the commission's last remaining committee prepared to shut down last Thursday, many South Africans were still debating the suc-

cess of their country's historic exercise in confronting its past.

"I am happy because we know the truth," said Cape Town resident Cynthia Ngewu, 60, who learned how her teen-age son Christopher Piet was gunned down in a 1986 police ambush.

The hearings were - by turns - horrifying and overwhelming.

In a 1996 hearing in East London, former African National Congress guerrilla Singqokwana Malgas described being savagely beaten by police, watching his house consumed in an arson fire, then suffering the disappearance of his son. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, the Nobel Peace laureate who chaired the commission, put his head in his hands and cried.

Commission critics range from conservative whites who argue it was a witch hunt to black victims who complain it let their persecutors get away with murder.

Other victims, however, cherished the chance to tell their stories, and, in some cases, lay old ghosts to rest.

More than 6,000 people applied for amnesty, bringing to light information that would have remained secret had they been prosecuted.

However, almost all senior apartheid-era politicians never accounted for their actions, most notably P.W. Botha, who ruled South Africa during some of the worst atrocities from 1978 to 1989, and ignored a commission summons.

Botha's successor, F.W. de Klerk, did testify. He gave a qualified apology for apart-

heid, saying he was unaware of the extent to which abuses took place. De Klerk secured a court ruling preventing the commission from writing about him in its interim report.

Winnie Madikizela-Mandela, anti-apartheid heroine and ex-wife of former President Nelson Mandela, was linked to killings, torture, assaults and arson carried out by her bodyguards in the late 1980s. But she was unapologetic in her testimony before the commission, saying she had been fighting a just war.

The committee considering perpetrators' amnesty applications will shut down today and the commission, established in 1995, is to issue a final report in September.

The government says it is (See Commission, Page 14)

Black, Arab Americans: Don't forget slain Africans

WASHINGTON — As a New York-based federal jury last week convicted four men accused of the American embassy bombings that killed 224 people and wounded over 4,600 others in a terrorist attack August 7, 1998, some Black and Arab American leaders made public calls for the United States to remember the thousands of Africans killed in addition to the 12 Americans who lost their lives in the skirmish between extremists and American foreign policy.

After three months of testimony and lengthy deliberations that caused jurors to request transcripts and evidence for review on several

occasions, four men, Mohamed Rashed Daoud Owhali, 24, of Saudi Arabia, Khalfan Khamis Mohammed, 27, of Tanzania, Wadih Hage, 40, of the United States and Mohammad Sadeek Odeh, 35, of Jordan were all found guilty in a 302-count indictment.

Two of the men face the death penalty in what is being called one of the United States' most far-reaching cases of police work as the men were extradited to the U.S. for trial (the bombing occurred at U.S. embassies in Tanzania and Kenya-considered U.S. soil).

Eighteen other defendants have been indicted-six of

whom are in custody.

In the aftermath of the trial, national media reported the common sense of comfort with the sentences as over 100 people watched the announcement of the verdicts. But for some, there is a concern for the thousands of African families affected by the near simultaneous blasts and the perception of Arab Americans here.

"The majority of people who died were not Americans," says TransAfrica Information Specialist Mwiza Munthali. TransAfrica, an organization headed by prominent international leader Randall Robinson, is a Washington D.C.-based lobbying

group aimed at generating economic and resource support for African and Caribbean nations.

"Many of the Africans slain were breadwinners of their families," Munthali said. "Hopefully the U.S. won't forget them-after all they were killed because of U.S. policies. Still thousands more endured career-ending injuries, they were just bystanders. There needs to be some follow-up of support."

Arab-Americans are also concerned about the social and political landscape in light of the ethnic origins of the convicted terrorists.

"The main concern that (See Africans, Page 15)

No U.N. accord yet on recompense for victims of racism

GENEVA, May 29 (IPS) — The question of reparations for slavery and colonialism has divided the delegations involved in drafting the final document for the United Nations-sponsored World Conference against Racism, to be held in Durban, South Africa, Aug. 31 to Sept. 7.

A bloc of African nations intends to approve measures in Durban about reparation, restoration and indemnity for countries, groups and individuals harmed by slavery and the slave trade, colonialism, and economic and political exclusion.

However, a totally different standard predominates among many industrialized

countries, which are hard-pressed to discuss even moral reparations.

The final document for Durban will be debated until the last moment in the South African city, because in the two periods of the preparatory commission's sessions, the regional groups have been unable to reach complete agreement on the text.

Knosazana Dlamini-Zuma, South Africa's Minister of Foreign Affairs, admitted today that during this last session of the preparatory committee, May 21 to June 1, an accord was not finalized on the "difficult issue" of compensation.

But despite the obstacles, the matter "is very important

for confronting the past," said the South African minister who is in Geneva to attend the preparatory sessions for the World Conference against Racism.

In South Africa, society is engaged in this "painful and uncomfortable" exercise, through a process that involves victims as well as per-

petrators, she said.

Throughout centuries of colonial domination, first by the Dutch, then the British, and later the "apartheid" regime under the white minority, South Africa's native African population was brutally subjugated by total racial segregation until 1994.

(See Victims, Page 13)

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