

MAY 2009

A Tireless Push for Justice

Interview with Javier Ciurlizza, Deputy Director of ICTJ's Americas Program

Q. When did your involvement in the Fujimori case begin?

A. It goes back to 1991. I had just graduated from university in 1991 and was working for a Peruvian human rights group. In December 1991, I received a phone call from my boss asking me to accompany a prosecutor to the morgue, because a massacre had taken place in downtown Lima in a neighborhood called Barrios Altos.



That night I went there and saw the bodies of 16 people who had been killed in Barrios Altos. Starting then I was very committed to the investigations by NGOs into this crime and into the revelations afterward about a mysterious group called the Colina Group, which belonged to the intelligence service and had strong links with Vladimiro Montesinos, the head of the intelligence service during Fujimori's presidency.

Many years after that, when Fujimori fled to Japan, I was appointed Chief of Cabinet of the Ministry of Justice, and I represented the Peruvian state in an international proceeding about precisely this case, the case of Barrios Altos. I went to Costa Rica to submit a petition on behalf of the Peruvian government acknowledging government responsibility for the case, and to ask for a judgment that could allow us to overcome the obstacle of the amnesty law that had been passed in Peru in 1995.

Interestingly, the other party in the proceeding was the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, headed by Juan Méndez, now president of ICTJ. Juan Méndez and I were in the same room asking the judges to allow a revision of the amnesty laws in Peru. A few days later, the court delivered the judgment that made it possible to prosecute members of the Colina Group.

After that I was also in the Peruvian Truth Commission investigating the same cases, but then as a pattern of crimes, rather than as single cases. And between 2005 and 2006, I was hired as a special advisor to the Ministry of Foreign Relations in charge of the extradition of Fujimori. I had the pleasure of taking the case files with me to Santiago, Chile, where Fujimori had flown from Japan, and ask for his preventive detention and subsequent extradition to Peru. So I can say I was involved in the case for 18 years.

Q. What did it feel like to see Fujimori convicted after so many years of work?

A. It was a complex feeling, because I was very close to the victims' relatives, the survivors. I witnessed how hard they fought for justice and for truth for so many years. I felt that our strength—the strength of NGOs and the transitional government and the Truth Commission—came from the families. They pushed tirelessly for justice.

Now that we have a verdict, I feel very happy because now they can rest—they can have real reparations, even if symbolic ones. At the same time, I think that the struggle for justice in Peru will continue. There are many cases still pending trial.

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INTERVIEW

Q. On April 23, Fujimori filed an appeal to have his conviction overturned. What do you expect the appeals process to bring?

A. First, it's difficult to say what the final result of the appeal will be—anything can happen legally. But if we analyze closely the arguments of the Special Court that delivered the verdict, the strength of those arguments is evident. The written opinion of the court is very solid. The conviction is based on hundreds of witnesses and documents, and there is strong evidence of the control Fujimori had over the activities of the Colina Group. I feel confident that even if the five-judge panel that has to review this judgment is very demanding in terms of formalities, it will be very difficult to change the result.

Q. When is there likely to be a decision on the appeal?

A. The Supreme Court does not have a timeline in legal terms—there is no deadline. However, past practice tells us the appeal can take between four and six months.

Q. The press has published a poll saying the majority of Peruvians support the guilty verdict against Fujimori. What is your sense of the popular response where you are in Colombia, and elsewhere in Latin America?

A. The impact of the Fujimori judgment throughout Latin America has been very important, not only because of the huge coverage Latin American press gave the case, but because of the inevitable comparison many can make between the Fujimori case and other cases of former or current presidents who are facing judicial problems.

The most important reaction in Colombia and other Latin American countries is that Peru has shown that the rule of law is alive and vigorous there, and the court showed a high degree of independence and objectivity dealing with a very complex case with evident political implications.

Q. Apart from other potential prosecutions, what are the likely political implications of the verdict?

A. There are two sides to that question: the internal effect in Peru and the effect internationally.

Speaking of Peru, from now on it will be impossible to say there was no state policy that involved human rights violations. It has been proven in court. This has huge implications in dozens of cases pending—not only against Fujimori, but against many members of the security forces who are being prosecuted for human rights violations.

In terms of the international implications, it's hard to say how far the precedent will go for other countries. But let me offer two examples of the practical implications. The first and most evident is that amnesty in Latin America has definitely been called into question. It is no longer possible for any country to maintain that an amnesty is enough to prevent prosecution. This question is currently under discussion in many countries, such as Mexico and Brazil.

The second is about the way that you attribute responsibility to a head of state. The Peruvian court has set a very important precedent by saying that if you have been part of the cover up of a crime and were in a position not to be, you are in effect the direct perpetrator of the crime. This argument can be used in many countries, in cases where the judiciary is discussing to what extent a superior can be qualified as a perpetrator if he or she has not participated materially in the crime.

Q. What was ICTJ's role in the Fujimori trial?

A. ICTJ had a very important role, both because it provided two legal briefs to the court raising these kinds of legal issues, but also because we observed the trial from beginning to end. We were in contact with all the parties concerned—not only with the judges but with the prosecutors and representatives of the victims—to provide very important and timely information regarding specific issues in international law. Those issues ranged from the attribution of responsibility, to the rules of immunity for heads of state, to questions of amnesty and other aspects of prosecutions that can be learned from our experience in other parts of the world.

Q. Can we take this experience as a confirmation that ICTJ's work has a very real effect on processes of transitional justice?

A. Absolutely. This trial has been a very important test of our capacity to monitor prosecutions and to support all the parties involved with crucial elements and concepts from international and comparative law. This is extremely important, because ICTJ has the capacity to bring together experts from many countries. Jurisprudence we provided, especially from Latin American countries including Argentina, Chile and Uruguay, were extremely useful to the judges.

Q. How will ICTJ be involved in the ongoing pursuit of justice in Peru?

A. Certainly we're going to follow the appeal, but there are also many other cases pending against Fujimori, mostly involving corruption. It's very important to follow these cases, because Fujimori's crimes, in their pattern and the organization they depended on, are very closely linked with corruption. In many ways, corruption and human rights help explain each other. There are important lessons for Colombia, for example, in the "para-politics" scandal involving links between politicians and paramilitary organizations. The connection between corruption and human rights violations is considered a new field, but it isn't new if we consider that they involve the same patterns. The Fujimori case gives us a chance to expand our knowledge and work in this field. ♦

AFRICA

Burundi

South African Minister of Defense Charles Nqakula, who has been a key facilitator of the Burundi peace process, began negotiations to implement the ceasefire agreement between the government of Burundi and the rebel Hutu Forces for National Liberation (FNL). According to the agreement, 2,100 former rebels will join Burundi's army, while the remaining 1,400 will join the police. The negotiations will also address the inclusion of the FNL in formal political processes, and the release of political prisoners.

- "Burundi forces to integrate 3,500 former FNL rebels," *Reuters* (<http://www.reuters.com/article/africaCrisis/idUSLH124990>)

Democratic Republic of Congo

ICTJ submitted a review of transitional justice in the DRC to the UN Human Rights Council as part of the council's Universal Periodic Review of member states' fulfillment of their human rights obligations. The review focuses on the ongoing security and human rights crisis in the DRC.

- "Transitional Justice Reviews of Cambodia and the DRC," ICTJ (<http://ictj.org/en/news/features/2529.html>)

Sierra Leone

On Apr. 8, the Special Court for Sierra Leone sentenced former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels Issa Hassan Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Gbao to 52, 40 and 25 years in prison for crimes committed during the Sierra Leone civil war. The former rebels were convicted of acts of terrorism, murder, mass extermination, rape and child conscription.

At the trial of former president Charles Taylor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in the Hague, Taylor's defense counsel moved for his acquittal, arguing that the prosecutors had not proved their case. Prosecutors responded on Apr. 9, and the judge scheduled a decision on the motion for May 4.

- "Special Court Sentenced RUF Convicts," *Sierra Leone Court Monitoring Program* (http://www.slcmp.org/drwebsite/reports/Special_Court_Sentenced_RUF_Convicts.shtml)
- "Prosecution's Oral Response to Defence Submission of No Case To Answer," CharlesTaylorTrial.org

(<http://charlestaylortrial.org/2009/04/11/prosecutions-oral-response-to-defence-submission-of-no-case-to-answer/>)

South Africa

The Pretoria High Court was expected to decide at the end of April or beginning of May whether the South African president should be restrained from issuing pardons for apartheid-era crimes pending the final determination of the case. ICTJ is a member of a coalition of South African civil society organizations challenging the exclusion of victims from the presidential pardons process. The legal challenge has already succeeded in preventing current President Kgalema Motlanthe from granting pardons before Apr. 22 elections.

- "Court bid to prevent Molanthe pardons," *Business Day* (<http://www.businessday.co.za/articles/national.aspx?ID=BD4A980644>)
- "Court told of victim participation in pardons," *The Citizen* (<http://www.citizen.co.za/index/article.aspx?pDesc=93705,1,22>)

Sudan

Despite the arrest warrant issued by the ICC last month, Sudan's President Omar Al-Bashir was able to travel to several countries, including Ethiopia, Egypt, Eritrea, Libya, Qatar and Saudi Arabia, arguing that the warrant has brought him more support. International support for the warrant remained divided.

- "Sudan's Bashir welcomed in Ethiopia despite warrant," *Reuters* (<http://www.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUSLL945881.CH.2400>)
- "Bashir warrant stirs up Doha Debates," *The Peninsula* (http://www.thepeninsulaqatar.com/Display_news.asp?section=Local_News&subsection=Qatar+News&month=April2009&file=Local_News2009042815959.xml)

AMERICAS

Argentina

President of the Argentine Supreme Court Ricardo Lorenzetti launched an ad-hoc governmental commission to address human rights violations that occurred during the military dictatorship of 1976-1983.

- "La Corte presentó comisión para agilizar casos de DDHH," *CIJ* (<http://www.cij.gov.ar/nota-907-La-Corte-presento-comision-para-agilizar-casos-de-DDHH.html>)

Brazil

The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights (IACHR) filed an application before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights against Brazil about the arbitrary detention, torture and forced disappearances of 70 people under the military dictatorship of 1964-1985.

- “IACHR takes case against Brazil to the Inter-American Court,” *Inter-American Commission on Human Rights* (<http://www.cidh.org/Comunicados/English/2009/16-09eng.htm>)

Canada

A delegation of Canadian aboriginals planned to meet with Pope Benedict XVI in the Vatican on Apr. 29 as a step toward “healing and reconciliation” over the Catholic Church’s role in the forced enrollment of more than 150,000 aboriginal children at church-run boarding schools starting in 1874. The pope was expected to acknowledge the Catholic Church’s role in the policy, as 75% of the schools involved were Catholic.

- “Canadian natives to meet Pope in pursuit of healing,” *AFP* (<http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5jFbP59mHT--Vq0ne0klRxOu7yQ>)
- “An apology from the Vatican,” *Northern News Service* (http://nns.com/northern-news-services/stories/papers/apr20_09va.html)

Colombia

Approximately 205,000 victims of war crimes committed by paramilitary forces have requested reparations from the government, according to the National Reparation and Reconciliation Commission. The first reparations, totaling \$85 million, will be distributed to 10,000 people in June. Reparations payments are expected to total \$3 billion.

A court ruled that Daniel Rendón, or “Don Mario,” Colombia’s most powerful paramilitary leader, is not eligible for a reduced sentence under the Justice and Peace law because of his failure to demobilize during the peace process in 2006. Rendón was captured on April 16, and currently faces extradition to the United States and charges for up to 3,000 drug trafficking-related deaths.

On Apr. 22, a U.S. court sentenced Diego “Don Berna” Murillo, another top paramilitary leader, to 31 years in prison for trafficking cocaine. Murillo was the first of the 17 paramilitary commanders

extradited to the U.S. by the Colombian government in 2008 to receive a sentence. The trial was criticized by Colombian victims’ organizations because of the failure of Murillo and other extradited warlords to tell the truth about crimes they committed in Colombia.

- “Reparación a por lo menos 10 mil víctimas entregaría este año el Gobierno,” *El Tiempo* (http://www.eltiempo.com/colombia/politica/ARTICULO-WEB-PLANTILLA_NOTA_INTERIOR-4959117.html)
- “Colombian police catch drug lord Daniel ‘Don Mario’ Rendon,” *Miami Herald* (<http://www.miamiherald.com/news/americas/story/1001936.html>)
- “Condenan a 31 años de prisión a ‘Don Berna’ por narcotráfico,” *Verdad Abierta* (<http://www.verdadabierta.com/web3/justicia-y-paz/extraditados/1153-condenan-a-31-anos-de-prision-a-don-berna-por-narcotrafico>)

Guatemala

The International Commission against Impunity in Guatemala (CICIG) will operate for two more years, according to an agreement reached by the United Nations and the Guatemalan government in late April. CICIG, created to investigate the activities of illegal armed groups and to promote measures against impunity, will work at least until September 4, 2011.

- “International commission against-impunity in Guatemala extends mission for two years,” *Guatemala Times* (<http://www.guatemala-times.com/news/guatemala/1039--international-commission-against-impunity-in-guatemala-cicig-extends-mission-for-two-years.html>)

Peru

On Apr. 7, the Peruvian Supreme Court found former president Alberto Fujimori guilty of kidnapping, murder and other human rights crimes and sentenced him to a 25-year prison term. ICTJ and many other international and local rights groups hailed the verdict as a major step toward accountability for human rights crimes in Latin America.

Fujimori is the first democratically elected leader in Latin America to be tried and convicted in his own country on human rights charges. His

lawyer filed an appeal to have the judgment overturned, and did not rule out appealing to the Inter-American Court on Human Rights.

After widespread criticism, the Peruvian government reversed its decision to block the construction of a museum to commemorate the victims of the 1980-2000 political violence that resulted in 70,000 deaths. The Museum of Memory Commission met for the first time on Apr. 20 to discuss construction proposals.

- Q&A: The Trial and Conviction of Alberto Fujimori, ICTJ (<http://ictj.org/en/news/features/2490.html>)
- “Peru: Fujimori Conviction a Major Step Toward Accountability in Latin America,” ICTJ (<http://ictj.org/en/news/press/release/2480.html>)
- “Peru’s Fujimori appeals human rights conviction,” *Reuters* (<http://uk.reuters.com/article/email/idUKN23354781>)
- “Peru gets a museum of memory,” *Radio Netherlands* (<http://www.radionetherlands.nl/currentaffairs/region/southamerica/090408-Peru-museum-Fujimori>)

United States

The U.S. Justice Department made public legal memos detailing harsh interrogation techniques including waterboarding, a technique described as illegal torture by the Obama administration. Meanwhile, the White House expressed resistance to a commission of inquiry into the Bush administration’s use of harsh interrogation techniques and opposed prosecution of CIA officials who conducted them.

Manfred Nowak, UN Special Rapporteur on Torture, announced that the Obama administration’s decision not to prosecute CIA interrogators violates international law and U.S. obligations under the Convention Against Torture. Under universal jurisdiction, a Spanish court is considering investigating former Bush administration officials for sanctioning torture.

In the case *Al-Haramain v. Obama*, formerly filed against the Bush administration, a judge rejected the use of “state secrets” arguments used by the Obama administration in defense of wiretapping measures taken in 2004 against a U.S.-based Islamic charity. The judge is requesting that the government make the information obtained through wiretapping available to the court.

- “Two Suspects Waterboarded 266 Times,” *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/21/world/21detain.html>)
- “Obama Resisting Push for Interrogation Panel,” *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/24/us/politics/24cong.html>)
- “U.N. torture official on America’s legal obligations to impose accountability,” *Salon* (<http://www.salon.com/opinion/greenwald/radio/2009/04/23/nowak/>)
- “Spanish court sends Guantanamo case to new judge,” *CNN* (<http://edition.cnn.com/2009/WORLD/europe/04/23/spain.court.guantanamo/>)
- “Judge Rejects President Obama’s ‘State Secrets’ Argument,” *ABC News* (<http://blogs.abcnews.com/politicalpunch/2009/04/judge-rejects-p.html>)

ASIA

Bangladesh

The government of Bangladesh has announced it will appoint a committee to investigate war crimes allegations against local collaborators with the Pakistan army during Bangladesh’s 1971 war of independence. Local civil society groups called for special tribunals, reparations to the victims, and memorialization of mass killing sites to establish accountability for atrocities that occurred during the war.

- “Agency on war crimes trial next week: minister,” *Front Page* (<http://www.newagebd.com/2009/apr/16/front.html#3>)
- “Badarganj Genocide Day to be observed on April 17,” *The Financial Express* (http://www.thefinancialexpress-bd.com/search_index.php?page=detail_news&news_id=63285)

Cambodia

Survivors and prison guards from the Khmer Rouge’s notorious S21 detention center took the witness stand as the trial of former Khmer Rouge officials continued at the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia (ECCC). Meanwhile, the court faced a funding crisis due to a freeze on donor funding after corruption and graft allegations surfaced.

ICTJ submitted a review of transitional justice in Cambodia to the UN Human Rights Council as part of the council’s Universal Periodic Review of member states’ fulfillment of their human rights obligations. The review addresses both the achievements of the ECCC and the

persisting concerns of political influence, corruption and delays that have the potential to undermine the judicial process.

- “Tuol Sleng survivors prepare to be questioned at ECCC,” *Phnom Penh Post*, (<http://www.phnompenhpost.com/index.php/2009042025394/National-news/Tuol-Sleng-survivors-prepare-to-be-questioned-at-ECCC.html>)
- “Transitional Justice Reviews of Cambodia and the DRC,” ICTJ (<http://ictj.org/en/news/features/2529.html>)

Indonesia

Members of Argentina’s Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo visited family members of government-sanctioned missing persons in the Papua region of Indonesia to express solidarity and encourage support for the ratification of the Convention against Enforced Disappearances.

The Indonesian government ordered the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to leave the Papua region after ICRC officials visited jailed members of the Free Papua Movement to ensure humane treatment.

- “Argentine mothers visit families of the disappeared,” *Jakarta Post* (<http://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2009/04/18/argentine-mothers-visit-families-disappeared.html>)
- “Indonesia orders ICRC out of Papua over jail visits,” *Reuters* (http://uk.reuters.com/article/homepageCrisis/idUKJAK434532.CH_.2420)

Nepal

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon released a report listing the ruling Maoist party in Nepal as one of 56 parties committing grave violations against children, which include: recruitment and use of children in the military; killing and maiming; rape and other grave sexual violence; abductions; attacks on schools and hospitals; and denial of humanitarian access to children. The report is to be reviewed by the UN Security Council, which will consider measures to ensure greater protection for children in conflict areas and accountability for perpetrators.

The Army Integration Special Committee appointed an expert panel to work with the UN Mission in Nepal in planning the supervision, integration and rehabilitation of over 20,000 former Maoist People’s Liberation Army combatants. The panel has three months to finalize the plan.

- “Maoists committing grave violations: UN Chief,” *Republica* (http://myrepublica.com/portal/index.php?action=news_details&news_id=4238)

- “A peek into army integration experts,” *Kantipur* (<http://www.kantipuronline.com/kolnews.php?&nid=187863>)

Solomon Islands

Following an announcement by the Australian government that it would contribute \$2.5 million toward the TRC in the Solomon Islands, Australian Minister of Home Affairs Bob Debus conducted a four-day visit to the islands to enhance political and legal cooperation between the two states. The Solomon Islands TRC, which receives advice and technical assistance from ICTJ, was established to address the 1998-2003 ethnic conflict on the islands.

- “Australian minister visits Honiara,” *Solomon Star* (http://solomonstarnews.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=8215&Itemid=26)

EUROPE

Germany

A U.S. Federal Court of Appeals halted the extradition of 89-year-old John Demjanjuk to Germany to face war crimes charges, just hours after immigration agents removed the U.S. citizen and former Nazi death camp guard from his home to send him to Germany. Munich prosecutors issued an arrest warrant for Demjanjuk in March, charging him with war crimes and more than 29,000 counts of accessory to murder related to his work as a guard at the Sobibor Nazi death camp in Poland in 1943.

- “Ohio: Accused Death Camp Guard is Granted a Stay,” *New York Times* (http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/15/us/15brfs-ACCUSEDDEATH_BRF.html?scp=1&sq=demjanjuk&st=cse)

MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Lebanon

The UN-backed Special Tribunal for Lebanon (STL) is scheduled to hold a hearing on Apr. 29 to announce its decision on whether or not to maintain four senior officers in detention in Lebanon in relation to the Hariri case. On Feb. 14, 2005 former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri was killed along with 21 others in a suicide bombing in Beirut. The STL, which is examining the case, opened in The Hague on Mar. 1.

On Apr. 13, Lebanese civil society groups marked the 34th anniversary of the start of the Lebanese Civil War through a series of activities to remember the hundreds of thousands of victims of the conflict, raise awareness, and prevent future violence.

- “Tribunal’s Pre-Trial Judge to Announce Decision on Generals on Wednesday,” *Naharnet* (<http://www.naharnet.com/domino/tn/NewsDesk.nsf/getstory?openform&6F39C3EB0AF9A436C22575A5003F5D4E>)
- “Lebanese mark start of civil war with calls for awareness,” *Daily Star* (http://www.dailystar.com.lb/article.asp?edition_id=1&category_id=1&article_id=100949)
- “Politics split anti-sectarian memorial,” *NOW Lebanon* (<http://www.nowlebanon.com/NewsArticleDetails.aspx?ID=88812>)

Morocco

As part of the implementation of the recommendations of Morocco’s truth commission on communal reparations for past human rights violations, the CDG, a state-owned financial agency, has launched two calls for proposals totaling about US \$2.5 million. Funding will go to projects pursuing memorialization and documentation of past crimes, building local capacity and social services, and working toward gender equality and environmental protection.

- “20.5 Million Moroccan Dirhams for the Program of Support for Reparation Actions in Regions Affected By Human Rights Violations,” CCDH (<http://www.ccdh.org.ma/spip.php?article1372>)

PUBLICATIONS

Transitional Justice Reviews of Cambodia and the DRC

ICTJ submitted reports on transitional justice measures in Cambodia and the DRC to the UN Human Rights Council to be considered as part of the Universal Periodic Review of state obligations to human rights. The report on Cambodia assesses the progress and shortcomings of the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia in prosecuting former Khmer Rouge leaders. The DRC review provides recommendations on how to address the ongoing security and human rights crisis throughout the country.

- *Cambodia: Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council* (http://www.ictj.org/static/UPR/UPR_Cambodia_ICTJ_April_2009.pdf)
- *DRC: Submission to the Universal Periodic Review of the UN Human Rights Council* (French only) (http://www.ictj.org/static/UPR/UPR_DRC_ICTJ_April_2009_French.pdf)

Southern Africa Regional Assessment on Transitional Justice

ICTJ’s Cape Town office and seven partner organizations in South Africa, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Angola and Namibia completed a major assessment of transitional justice initiatives in these five countries. The assessment included recommendations on how to address past political violence and human rights atrocities throughout the region.

- *Southern Africa Regional Assessment: Executive Summary* (http://www.ictj.org/static/Africa/SAfrica/SARA_Executive_Summary.pdf)

CALENDAR AND COURSE OFFERINGS

may

May 4-6:

**Congress on Disarmament,
Demobilization and Reintegration**

Foreign Affairs Ministry, Presidential Agency
for Social Action

Cartagena, Colombia

For more information, please contact María
Cristina Rivera: mrivera@ictj.org

May 6:

**Conference: “Accountability After Mass
Atrocity: Latin American and African
Examples in Comparative Perspective”**

Washington, D.C.

For more information, contact Anne O’Dell at
aodell@gmu.edu

May 15:

Conference: 30 years of the Amnesty Law

Sao Paulo, Brasilia and Porto Alegre, Brazil

For more information, please contact: María
Cristina Rivera, mrivera@ictj.org

May 16:

**ICTJ/Memory at Work workshop: “The
War as Memorial and Monument”**

Beirut, Lebanon

For more information, contact info@memoryatwork.org

May 21:

**International Conference: “Experiences
of Truth-Seeking” (South Africa, Peru,
Chile, Paraguay)**

Bogotá, Colombia

For more information, contact Marcela
Birceño-donn: mbircenodonn@ictj.org

May 28-29

**International Peace Institute/African
Union Workshop: “Non-Impunity, Truth,
Justice and Reconciliation in Africa”**

Monrovia, Liberia

For more information, contact Mary Anne
Feeney: feeney@ipinst.org

june

June 2-3:

**ICTJ/Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Reparations Training Workshop for
Federal Homeland Secretariat Officials**

Mexico City, Mexico

For more information, please contact: María
Cristina Rivera, mrivera@ictj.org

June 3-4:

**Conference “Making the Difference:
Strengthening Capacities to Respond to
Crises and Security Threats”**

Brussels, Belgium

For more information, visit www.making-the-difference.eu

June 4-5:

**ICTJ/ Konrad Adenauer Foundation
Workshop with Supreme Court Justices
from Argentina, Colombia and Peru**

Mexico City, Mexico

For more information, please contact: María
Cristina Rivera, mrivera@ictj.org

June 5-7:

**Leuven University Conference:
“Transitional Justice and Rule of Law”**

Brussels, Belgium

For more information, write info@kuleuven.be

June 15-19:

**Transitional Justice Summer School:
“Negotiating Peace, Negotiating Justice”**

University of Ulster,

Jordanstown, Northern Ireland

For more information, visit: http://transitionaljustice.ulster.ac.uk/events_news/summer_school_2009.html

June 16-18:

**ICTJ/NYU Law School Essentials Course in
Transitional Justice**

National University of Singapore

For more information, visit: <http://www.ictj.org/en/workshops/courses/index.html>

Making a Difference

ICTJ needs your support to help societies address the past as they emerge from conflict, to give them a better chance for a decent future and a lasting peace. Since 2001 ICTJ has worked in more than 35 countries, partnering with justice and truth-seeking institutions, local civic groups, governments and international organizations.

The current government of the Solomon Islands has made national reconciliation its top priority. It is establishing a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to shed light on the ethnic conflict that took place between 1998 and 2003. This is a major step forward in the Solomon Islands' efforts to engage with the past and ensure respect for human rights.

In early April, a woman dropped into the TRC office to introduce herself and ask how she could support the process. She had helped disarm militants and plan reconciliation ceremonies in her community in Guadalcanal, one of the main islands in the country, but said her work was only half-done. As she told ICTJ staff present, she had been waiting for something like the TRC—a nation-wide commitment to the kind of work she was already doing—and was eager to get involved.

ICTJ has been advising the government since mid-2008, drawing from its staff's broad experience with truth commissions around the world. In February 2009, ICTJ established an office in Honiara, the capital of the Solomon Islands, and is now providing advice and technical assistance to the government and to the new commission staff.

The commission's Deputy Executive Secretary, David Tuhonuku, says that the tensions that broke out from 1998 to 2003 are still lurking beneath the surface. He believes the TRC will provide a safe way for victims to speak about their experiences with dignity, and to have their suffering acknowledged. He hopes that the TRC, by giving space to air grievances, will put to rest any threat that the tensions could re-emerge. ICTJ is committed to helping him meet these goals.

ICTJ provides expertise that transforms the lives of victims and creates healthy judicial systems and sustainable societies. International demand for our assistance increases each year, and your support has never been more important. Learn more at www.ictj.org or contact MaryClaire Brooks, Director of Individual Giving, at 917-637-3844, or mbrooks@ictj.org.



Members of the Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission National Selection Committee held a stakeholders awareness workshop on Mar. 18, 2009.



Solomon Islands children celebrating during the country's July 7 Independence Day festivities. Photo by Jeremy Miller.

About ICTJ

The International Center for Transitional Justice assists countries pursuing accountability for past mass atrocity or human rights abuse. ICTJ, headquartered in New York, has offices in Beirut, Bogotá, Brussels, Bujumbura, Cape Town, Dili, Geneva, Jakarta, Kathmandu, Kinshasa and Monrovia.

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