

Transitional Justice

Zimbabwe's Time to Look Forward, Backward, and Inward

05 October 2012

The International Conference on Transitional Justice in Zimbabwe opened yesterday at Troutbeck Inn, Nyanga where delegates called upon Zimbabwe to reflect deeply on the critical questions of the time. The conference organised by the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum was opened by Cousin Zilala, a board member of the Forum. In his opening address, Zilala expressed the hope that the conference would give Zimbabwe the time it requires to ask serious questions regarding transitional justice and learn from the experiences of other countries.

Presentations were made by Juergen Schurr, lawyer with London based Redress who told delegates of the global experiences and challenges of transitional justice that Zimbabwe must brace for. He said during a transition from violent conflict, it is important that victims are also active partners and not be treated only objects of sympathy.



Dr. Undine Whande delivers the key note at the conference in Nyanga



Lyandro Komakech, Uganda

His presentation was followed by a presentation by Anthony Reeler, Director of the locally based Research and Advocacy Unit, who gave the historical context of transitional justice in Zimbabwe.

Immediately the conference delved into the case studies of Rwanda and Uganda which were presented by Freddy Mutanguha and Lyandro Komakech respectively. Freddy Mutanguha, himself a survivor of the Rwandan genocide spoke passionately about how Rwanda emerged from the ashes of the genocide and the approaches employed to deal with the tragedy and forge a new future.

Lyandro Komakech, an activist, lawyer, lecturer and researcher presented to the delegates the Ugandan experience pointing out that like most of the African





Mrs. Zembe, ONHRI

states, Uganda is haunted by past legacies of violence, botched transitional justice processes and multiple dilemmas. He emphasised the need for Africa to relook into the traditional means of resolving conflicts. Komakech said the challenge of Africa was that truth is always buried in a heap lies and there is need for a concerted effort to liberate the truth. Many times, corruption took away what rightly belonged to the victims as leaders declare themselves victims in pseudo-transitional justice processes.

The opening session was followed by a reception in which the Organ on National Healing Reconciliation and Integration (ONHRI) updated the delegates on the progress made so far in helping restore Zimbabwe from the scourge of violence. Mrs. Zembe, the Director in the ONHRI

gave a detailed report on the work of the Organ and partners. Her presentation preceded a key note address that was delivered by Dr. Undine Whande from the Capetown based Centre for the Study of Violence and Reconciliation. Dr Whande gave a deep reflection on transitional justice in which she called upon the transitional justice movement in Zimbabwe not to get lost in theories and expert social engineering but to tap into their own experiences and realise the living connection between looking into the past and designing a new future. She said transitional justice emerges from deep impulse of humanity: the impulse to heal and restore, and the impulse to order - to prevent non-recurrence. She said not only must we look forward, not only must we look backward, but we must also look inward.



Delegates analyse the case of Uganda and Rwanda at the conference

The conference continues today with presentations expected on Germany, the Philippines, Kenya and Liberia.



PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES



RWANDA

**GOVERNMENT AND DEALING WITH THE PAST
FREDDY MUTANGUHA (AEGIS TRUST, RWANDA)**



UGANDA

**TRADITIONAL MECHANISMS OF DEALING WITH THE PAST
KOMAKECH LYANDRO (REFUGEE LAW PROJECT, UGANDA)**



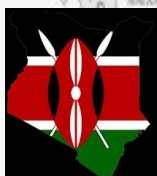
GERMANY

**INCLUSIVENESS IN TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE PROCESSES
JOACHIM FOERSTER (GERMANY FEDERAL OFFICE FOR THE RECORD OF THE FORMER STATE SECURITY SERVICE ARCHIVES)**



PHILIPPINES

**ECONOMICALLY EXPOSED PERSONS, ASSET RECOVERY AND REPARATIONS
CLETO R. VILLACORTA III (REGIONAL COURT, PHILIPPINES)**



KENYA

**THE HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION AND TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE
DAVIS MALOMBE (KENYA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION)**



LIBERIA

**ENGENDERING TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE
BLANCHE S. GAIE (WOMEN IN PEACE AND SECURITY NETWORK - AFRICA)**



SOUTH AFRICA (KEYNOTE ADDRESS)

**JUSTICE, RECONCILIATION AND PEACE IN AFRICA
UNDINE WHANDE (CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF VIOLENCE & RECONCILIATION)**

