



## Justice in Africa- On Whose Terms? 2010 Spring Conference; Washington, DC

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As a community of organizations and individuals, informed by Catholic Social Teaching, dedicated to educating and advocating for responsible U.S. relations with Africa, members of the Africa Faith and Justice Network have long been interested in seeing our elected officials support peacebuilding, human rights, and social justice on the African continent. We support U.S. economic and political policies that will benefit Africa's peoples, facilitate an end to armed conflict, and promote sustainable development.

*In particular, we urge Congress to take immediate action on the following issues:*

### **Support the eradication of widespread violence against women**

- By forming the Office for Global Women's issues within the department of State, calling for ambitious and accountable country-specific programming, and requiring the integrating women's issues into all aspects of US foreign policy, the International Violence Against Women Act (I-VAWA) will demonstrate to the world that the US doing its part for women.
- While fighting impunity for acts of sexual violence, I-VAWA would also direct the US, through its support of local organizations, to empower women in politics, economy, education, human rights promotion, and participation in peacebuilding.
- Please **co-sponsor the International Violence Against Women Act (H.R. 4594, S.2982)** immediately. Encourage colleagues to do the same and take meaningful steps to ensure its passage.
- Ensure sufficient funding is made available to USAID to effectively implement the strategy outlined as required by the bill.

### **Support democracy in Africa, beginning with Rwanda**

- Elections in Rwanda are taking place this August, and the recurring instances of political violence and suppression are troubling.
- Call for a hearing and request a report from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on the socio-political situation in Rwanda.
- Ensure that independent election observers are sent to Rwanda in addition to pressuring the Rwanda government to open the political space to the opposition and hold free, fair, and transparent elections in August of 2010.
- Call for an immediate registration of opposition parties seeking to do so and respect of human rights particularly the freedom of expression and assembly.
- Call for an immediate end to the use of violence and genocide guilt as a tactic to silence, intimidate, arrest, and imprison innocent members of the opposition.