

March-April 2008

## Bush's Africa Legacy: Difficult to Reconcile

By Beth Tuckey

<b>Bush's Legacy</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>AFRICOM Website</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>ND and Uganda</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Triggers of Conflict</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>AFJN Conferences</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Burundi</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Happenings in Brief</b>	<b>7</b>



President Bush was welcomed by billboards thanking him for his generosity, by women wearing his image on their *kangas*, and by dancing children. However, protests were also staged by civil society in several African countries.

When it comes to Africa, most American Presidents have had little interest in the continent and its people. However, over the past several administrations, the Executive Branch has sought increased involvement in African affairs, ranging from humanitarian aid to military support. Former President Bill Clinton is known around the continent for his initiatives aimed at increasing economic growth and development, though his fame is arguably overblown. Oddly enough, for better or for worse, President George W. Bush has engaged more with Africa than any President preceding him. From PEPFAR to AFRICOM, Bush has promoted an American agenda in the African context; a foreign policy that, despite its benefits, has had significant repercussions on the people of Africa.

From February 15<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, President Bush visited Benin, Tanzania, Rwanda, Ghana, and Liberia – his second trip to the continent since he took office in 2001. In many ways, the trip resembled a victory lap. He touted the achievements of his administration in combating HIV/AIDS through the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), preventing malaria, and increasing the development capacity of African governments through the Millennium Challenge Account and education initiatives. He made speeches about the potential of Africa, about its "natural beauty, vibrant culture, and an unmistakable spirit of energy and optimism."

Unfortunately, it seems that Bush's showcase of successes in Africa may be nothing more than an attempt to find a legacy that is worth remembering. At the head of an ad-

*(Continued on page 2)*

### 25th Anniversary Conference

April 18-21, 2008

"Celebrating Africa:  
Analysis to Action"

with

special guests

Jeffrey Sachs and

Ishmael Beah

(Continued from page 1)

ministration mired in international blunders, he is trying to show that not all of his foreign policy choices have been flawed and that despite all of the bad, he has done some good, too. But the tangible benefits he has bestowed upon the people of Africa must be placed in the context of his broader policies in Africa. The spirit of generosity and kindness that he exhibited during his trip is as difficult to come to terms with as his seemingly blind vision of the realities in the Middle East.

Bush's legacy of benevolence is tainted by the motives of his anti-terrorism, go-it-alone attitude toward the world. Yes, PEPFAR has provided \$15 billion worth of medication and supplies to fight HIV/AIDS, but at what hidden cost? Many argue that PEPFAR was simply created as a way to avoid contributing to the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and TB and to allow Bush to push his own agenda of prevention rather than treatment. Though such policy does not negate the positive impacts of PEPFAR, it does offer a small window into the way Bush has viewed Africa and the way in which he pursues American interests on the continent.

A much more revealing example of Bush's attitude toward Africa is the establishment of AFRICOM. As you well know from past issues of *Around Africa*, the new military command aims to increase development under the Department of Defense and to train African militaries such that the US can "help Africans help themselves." During the Cold War, large sums of money were poured into military training and capacity-building on the African continent, often at the expense of African civilians. It is a policy that ultimately failed to create stability in Africa and yet Bush has resumed such financing under the auspices of a Global War on Terror.

The U.S.-backed invasion of Somalia by Ethiopia is the most striking example of the overreach of American mili-

tary might, but the list is long. The United States awards millions of dollars annually to the Rwandan government despite the fact that President Paul Kagame continues to fuel General Laurent Nkunda's human rights abusive rebel movement in Eastern D.R. Congo. In Uganda, the US is conducting what is labeled "peacekeeping" training and is in fact counter-insurgency training. For fiscal year 2009, President Bush has requested that Congress approve approximately \$1.3 billion worth of bilateral military programs relating to Africa, including the construction of an AFRICOM headquarters in Stuttgart, Germany.

Despite the rhetoric of development and partnership during his trip to Africa, President Bush has clearly militarized relations with African governments. Before Bush left for Africa, AFJN contributed to a press call that highlighted, among other things, the increased focus on the military under the Bush administration. AFJN Staff members Bahati Ntama Jacques and Beth Tuckey also wrote articles entitled "The US 'War on Terror' Exported to Rwanda: A Threat to Peace in the DRC" and "Beyond AFRICOM: Toward a New Concept of Security" in response to Bush's trip to the continent. Both can be found on the AFJN website.

"Bush's legacy of benevolence is tainted by the motives of his anti-terrorism, go-it-alone attitude toward the world."

Clearly, Bush has done good things for the people of Africa, as evidenced in his approval rating there (it is among the highest in the world at an average of 80%). But the double-standard of promoting health and democracy while at the same time undermining the progress of stability across the continent cannot be reconciled. If Bush truly wants to leave a positive legacy in Africa, he ought to invest in initiatives that bring about peace and stability without involvement from the military.

## resistAFRICOM

**In February, a new website campaign was born.** In conjunction with the Hip Hop Caucus, Africa Action, Foreign Policy in Focus, and TransAfrica Forum, AFJN launched **www.resistafricom.org**. It's primary purpose? To serve as a central location for advocacy against the new US military command for Africa—AFRICOM. There you can read the latest news about AFRICOM, find out why we oppose the command, and sign up to stay involved!

After a successful Call-In-Day on March 12th, it is important that we **keep the pressure on** our elected officials. Each time you raise your concerns with someone on the Hill—whether it be by email, phone, letter, or in person—we are one step closer to stopping the destructive mission of AFRICOM. Please join us by visiting [www.resistafricom.org](http://www.resistafricom.org) today!

## Where Research and Outreach Intersect

Compiled by Fr. Rocco Puopolo

Two hundred and fifty Notre Dame Students attended a one-day student-led symposium on human development studies at Notre Dame on February 23, 2008. Mr. Ray Offenheiser, a Notre Dame graduate who is now the president of Oxfam America, offered the keynote. What started in September 2006 as the Millennium Development Initiative at Notre Dame University has become the Ford Family Program for Human Development Studies and Solidarity. Now in its second year of development, this symposium was the first public event of the Ford Program.

The Millennium Development Initiative was to be the vehicle through which Notre Dame would participate in the Millennium Villages Project, inspired by the work of Professor Jeffrey Sachs of Columbia University's Earth Institute. It was also foreseen as a creative way to promote solidarity and human well-being with Uganda Martyrs University in Nkozi subcounty, about 50 miles west of the Ugandan capital, Kampala, and the Catholic Church's development arm, *Caritas*. This moves the program beyond the Millennium Villages Project framework.

The Ford Program encourages an interdisciplinary approach to the study and practice of human development that emphasizes the inherent dignity of the human person. This is guided by the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. In this way, the Ford Program affords Notre Dame the opportunity to serve the Catholic Church through scholarship and to strengthen the Catholic Church's service and outreach to the wider human family.

A very unique and powerful direction of this program is its appreciation for the interaction of culture and religion as well as the economic, political, social and environmental factors in the context of human development, in its service to the Church, and in its objective to build community across cultures. The Ford Program aspires not only to advance knowledge and promote innovation that makes a positive difference in people's lives, but also to build a transnational and interdisciplinary alliance of scholars, researchers and public servants that will be devoted to al-

leviating extreme poverty for many years to come.

The Ford Program has three foundations: Teaching, Research and Outreach. The director of the program, Fr. Bob Dowd, faculty member at Notre Dame and president of the AFJN Board, stated recently that the outreach component - grounded in the Ugandan context, partnered with both a university there as well as the National Caritas Program, is what makes this program unique, exciting and practical. As the program grows, it may extend its outreach beyond Uganda.



Rev. John Jenkins, CSC, President of Notre Dame University, with Rev. James Burasa, CSC, District Superior, Congregation of Holy Cross East Africa.

Notre Dame's efforts in Uganda are strengthened by the relationship Notre Dame is developing with Uganda Martyrs University, Uganda's Catholic university, and the Catholic Church through *Caritas*. As Catholic universities, Notre Dame and Uganda Martyrs University share common values and a similar view of the human person. Uganda Martyrs University has strong programs in agriculture, public health, development studies, good governance and business. Notre Dame has strengths in engineering, the biological sciences, the social sciences and business. *Caritas*

is at work throughout Uganda in areas of agriculture, micro-finance, civic education and justice and peace. The partnership has the makings of a multi-dimensional approach to promoting human well-being.

Research and participation by the students in internships and faculty in fellowships will directly contribute to human welfare in Nindye, site of the Notre Dame-UMU-*Caritas* effort and Ruhiira, site of the Millennium Villages Project (MVP) partnership. Nindye, located in Mpigi District just 20 minutes from Uganda Martyrs University, was selected by a team of Ugandans that included faculty members at Uganda Martyrs University and experts on development at the United Nations Development Program-Uganda who found Nindye to be a place where there is both dire need and good local leadership. Ruhiira, located in Isingiro District near the Uganda-Tanzania border, is the site of the MVP where it was launched in March 2006.

(continued on page 5)

## Triggers of Conflict in Africa

By Bahati Ntama Jacques

After the violence, death, and displacement in Kenya, it seems the leaders have finally agreed upon a power-sharing deal that placates both sides. Kenya's conflict has now subsided from the news headlines and it is hoped that the country will begin to reestablish itself as a stable African nation. However, it is important that we continue to examine the issues at play in Kenya and that we do not divert our eyes from the continent of Africa. What lessons can we learn from the Kenya example? What is it that we, as advocates for peace in Africa, need to know to prevent another crisis such as Kenya's?

The end of authoritarian regimes will be the beginning of peace and prosperity in Africa. Authoritarian regimes are one-party states headed by the president who runs the nation with a few elites; or in their modern forms, the leader allows for the creation of other parties to establish a pseudo-democracy, but the government remains non-democratic. These regimes are corrupt, greedy, oppressive, controlling, and limit citizen participation in government. Power is often in the hands of the elites and decisions are made by a few in the name of all citizens. Uganda fits this description. Zimbabwe fits this description. Libya, Cameroon, and Equatorial Guinea fit this description. To end such regimes, many opposition leaders find it necessary to take up arms and fight from inside as well as from neighboring nations. Many African leaders get into power by force or use force to remain in power.

"The end of authoritarian regimes will be the beginning of peace and prosperity in Africa."

The current Chadian President Idriss Déby and his rebel group the Patriotic Salvation Movement overthrew former president of Chad Hissene Habre in 1990 with military support from both the Sudanese and Libyan governments. In 2005, he campaigned for a referendum that amended the constitution thereby extending the presidential term beyond two years. The referendum allowed him to run and win the presidential election for the third time in 2006 after wins in both 1996 and 2001. President Yoweri Museveni of Uganda has followed a similar course, changing the constitution in 2005 to allow himself a third run at the presidency. Museveni, once known as the first in

a line of new, legitimate, and hopeful African leaders, has now been in power since 1986 and is growing increasingly corrupt with each year in office.

Today, Chad and Uganda are not listed as military dictatorial regimes. In this way, Western powers have been apathetic in making sure African leaders learn the democratic principles. Instead, the West helps them strengthen their oppressive regimes, perhaps in part because they still adhere to the philosophy of the Berlin Conference of 1885. In dividing up the states of Africa, European powers had in mind exploitation, not development. This Western view of Africa as the place for resources continues to make Africa susceptible to authoritarian regimes and therefore a perfect and favorable ground for internal and interstate conflicts.

Mobutu Sese Seko, former president of Zaire, now the Democratic Republic of the Congo, stayed in power from 1965-1997 despite strong internal opposition and armed rebellions. The United States of America, interested in Congo's Cold War support and natural resources such as Uranium, disregarded Mobutu's human rights violations and helped him survive the Congolese people's attempt to end his oppression. France and Belgium also defended Mobutu against those who opposed his policies. Finally, in 1996, Mobutu faced two determined enemies: a serious prostate cancer which took his life only shortly after his second enemy Laurent Desire Kabila took power in an invasion led by Rwandan, Ugandan and Burundian troops. Some African regimes like Mobutu's are guilty of human rights abuses enough to call them out of their offices, but many have grown so strong at home and abroad that it is hard to depose of them peacefully. Others, such as Egyptian president Hosni Mubarak who has been in power since 1952 and Libyan president Muammar Al-Gaddafi who has been in power since 1969 have secured their power at home and have continuously ignored voices against their dictatorships from the international community.

Bad governance is key to understanding conflicts in and between African nations. African administrations tend to be more exclusive than inclusive. Politicizing and mismanaging the rich ethnic African diversity continues to be one of the causes of political crises and is often followed by ethnic wars. The Hutu-Tutsi wars in Rwanda and Burundi were the result of exclusive and marginalizing approaches to governing multiethnic states. Even though there is relative peace in these two nations today, the scars

(Continued on page 7)

Peace In...

Uganda

In February, AFJN sponsored the **2008 Northern Uganda Conference and Lobby Day: 'Be a Piece of the Peace'** presented by Resolve Uganda. Panelists from around the world provided a thorough analysis of the situation in Uganda and the role of the U.S. government in the peace process. Opening with a screening of "War/Dance" and concluding with lobby visits on Capitol Hill, it was an exciting and informative 3-day event that drew approximately 750 people to DC. It was an historic event, too – the advocacy effort was the largest ever on any African issue! The situation in Uganda is continually improving with the advancement of a peace agreement – check [www.resolveuganda.org](http://www.resolveuganda.org) for up-to-date news and analysis.



Uganda Lobby Team with AFJN Staff Member Bahati Ntama.

and the World

At the beginning of March, AFJN sponsored and took part in organizing the **2008 Ecumenical Advocacy Days: 'Claiming a Vision of True Security'** presented by the Christian faith community. The Africa Track went to Congress to request a stop on funding for AFRICOM and to instead put the money into the Global Fund for HIV/AIDS, Malaria, and TB. The overall theme of the conference was aimed at promoting just and true security that involves development and diplomacy, not the military. AFJN Staff spoke on three of the Africa Track panels, including "U.S.-Africa Policy Today: Bad Old Habits in Shiny New Armor," "DRC—An Ongoing Struggle for Peace," and "Seeking Participatory Governance in Africa."



EAD Speakers Dr. Benjamin Lartey and Emira Woods

Still More Conferences to Come!

For 25 years, AFJN has promoted a just U.S.-Africa policy and has engaged in advocacy and education to bring about real change in American mentality toward the continent and its people. From April 18<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>st</sup>, we will celebrate such efforts on behalf of the people of Africa. With a keynote from Ishmael Beah, author of *A Long Way Gone: Memoirs of a Boy Soldier* and a live teleconference with Jeffrey Sachs, economist and author of *The End of Poverty*, the conference kickoff will be informative and inspiring. With several exciting workshops and events planned, the four days should be a fitting celebration of Africa and AFJN's work over the years. Stay tuned for the next issue of *Around Africa* for a recap of both the AFJN Conference as well as Congo Global Action's 2008 Conference and Advocacy Day.

(Continued from page 3)

Projected plans for the next three years include: offering research assistance positions to students from both universities, conferences on Human Development both at Notre Dame as well as in countries experiencing extreme poverty, curriculum development towards an interdisciplinary minor in human development studies, and visiting fellowships between these and maybe other universities.

This initiative speaks of mutuality and shared learning. It is the kind of engagement that we at Africa Faith and Justice Network encourage all universities and churches to follow. The human ties between the people of the United States and the people of Africa are at the very root of AFJN's mission. The Ford Program is a win/win for the two universities, faculty, and students and a win/win for the people who are part of the outreach in the two Ugandan rural communities of Nindye and Ruhiira.

# Opportunities and Challenges in Burundi

By Bahati Ntama Jacques

President Pierre Nkurunziza was recently in Washington and in his remarks at the Woodrow Wilson Center for Scholars on February 6, 2008, he offered Burundi as an example of hope in a troubled Africa. Nkurunziza took office on August 26, 2005 as the second democratically elected president in Burundi. This is the first time in Burundi's history an elected president has held the office for more than two years. It is a sign of hope for Burundi, given its long history of political assassinations and several coup attempts. Between 1961 and 2001, 12 leaders were assassinated, among them three prime ministers, a Roman Catholic bishop, and the first Burundian democratically elected president, Melchior Ndadaye who was assassinated just three months after his election.

## Opportunities

This is the time for Burundi to build its development foundation. The Burundian government plans to review its constitution (as it is required by law to be done every five years) to encourage investors who are interested in business in Burundi. The Code of Investment is one of the laws that needs revision because it has been a hindrance to developing Burundi's tourism sector.

Through its community service program, Burundians have built 200 primary schools in addition to 300 built by the government. Burundi provides free primary school education and free healthcare for all pregnant woman and every child under the age of 5.

On the issue of peace and conflict, a ceasefire negotiation with the FNL rebel group is in progress and there is hope that the deal will be sealed soon. Burundi is grateful for the help it received during its civil war and today it is giving back by contributing peacekeeping troops in Sudan, Somalia and Ivory Coast. In addition, unlike any other government to date, Nkurunziza plans to examine Burundian history by putting in place the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) to deal with all crimes committed since 1962. This not only aims to build a stable and peace-

ful Burundi, but also to bring an end to years of hurt and anger that many Burundians live with daily. One of the challenges that has delayed the trial of some of the criminals, says president Nkurunziza, has been the temporary immunity stipulated in the Arusha accord.

## Land and Property

The issue of land rights is a serious one in Burundi. Consequently, the government recently put in place the "land and other property commission." With an area of 27,830 sq. km, Burundi is a very small country for its estimated 7,548,000 people. Land is a particularly difficult issue for

Burundians who were born in refugee camps after 1962, for orphans, and for those whose land was sold because they belonged to rebel groups. Fortunately, on the matter of land inheritance and women, the Burundian government has put in place a law to allow them to inherit land - a huge opportunity for the country to change its mentality on women's rights.



Government to address issue of land rights.

## Challenges

Despite such successes, Burundi still faces many challenges. In 2007, the

World Bank estimated Burundi to be the poorest country in the world. Disease, high birth rates, HIV/AIDS, and disarmament of civilians who were involved in the civil war are all issues that remain to be addressed. Also, in light of the situation in Kenya, Burundi should be on the radar of the international community because of its history of ethnicized politics. Among the three Burundian tribes, Hutu, Tutsi and Twa, there has always been tension between the Hutu and the Tutsi. Before the election of President Melchior Ndadaye, a Hutu, Burundi had been led by Tutsi presidents since its independence from Belgium in 1962. In 1972, rivalry between the two tribes resulted in the killing of about 100,000 Hutu intellectuals and moderate Tutsi. After the assassination of President Ndadaye by Tutsi military extremists in 1993, Hutu and Tutsi alike died in large numbers. The United Nations called this genocide against the Tutsi minority. Thus, while Burundi has made great strides under President Nkurunziza, it must be wary of the difficulties faced by new democracies in Africa.

## AFJN Happenings In Brief

### Sign-On Letters and Petitions:

- Letter urging Members of Congress to pass the Water for the World Resolution (H.R.266).
- Letter to Congress insisting on reforms in International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies before the sale of its gold reserves.
- AFJN Petition asking the U.S. Government to encourage Rwandan President Paul Kagame to stop supporting conflict in Eastern D.R. Congo (**sign the petition online today!**)

### AFJN Events and Conferences:

- February 5: Launch of [www.resistafricom.org](http://www.resistafricom.org).
- February 11: AFJN sponsors a Press Call with reporters in anticipation of Bush's visit to Africa.
- February 21: Bahati speaks on rape in Congo at St. Catherine's Academy in New York City.
- February 24-26: 2008 Northern Uganda Symposium and Lobby Day in DC—'Be a Piece of the Peace.'
- February 24-27: 2008 Social Ministry Gathering
- March 8-10: 2008 Ecumenical Advocacy Days in DC—'Claiming a Vision of True Security.'
- March 10: Bahati speaks on 'Africa and the Media' panel at Howard University, Washington DC.
- March 11: Bahati speaks on D.R. Congo at a Unitarian Universalist Church in Bethesda, MD.
- March 12: AFRICOM Call-In-Day to Congress.

### Meetings:

- Several briefings and hearings on AFRICOM or US militarization of aid abroad.
- Meetings with Senate Armed Services and Senate Foreign Relations staffers on AFRICOM.
- Woodrow Wilson Center events with Burundian President Nkurunziza and on Slavery in Mauritania.
- Congressional Human Rights Caucus briefing on DRC.
- Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing on US policy in the Horn of Africa.

### Regular Working Group Meetings:

- Congo Global Action Coalition
- AFRICOM Working Group
- Catholic Task Force on Africa
- Water Working Group
- Catholic Working Group on Sudan
- Ecumenical Advocacy Days Planning Committee
- Post-Bush Collaborative Policy Group
- Northern Uganda Working Group



Anniversary Conference

← See you there! April 18-21, Holiday Inn Hotel, Rosslyn, Virginia.

*(Continued from page 4)*

from the many and long wars may burst at any time if nothing is done in terms of good governance, peace, reconciliation, and prevention of conflict.

One of the most significant groups to suffer from political exclusion is that of women. Women often find it difficult – if not impossible – to participate in political processes and their rights tend to come secondary to those of men. However, many African countries have proven to be quite responsive to the importance of putting women in positions of leadership. Under President Paul Kagame, Rwanda has taken the lead with a constitution that requires at least 30% of its leadership to be women. Research studies show that countries which have undergone civil conflict and have seen a complete restructuring of their political system tend to include women in government in far greater numbers than countries which have not experienced conflict. The reason for this, experts argue, is that it is much more difficult to put women into an already-established governing

body than to write women into a newly forming political system.

However, when a government fails to equally distribute resources and opportunities across the nation, this becomes ground for conflict. People are starving, they lack health-care, and literacy rates are stagnating while leaders are depositing state funds into personal bank accounts and are living luxurious lifestyles. It is because people are poor that rebel groups find recruits to fight for change with violence instead of using nonviolence and diplomacy.

In conclusion, even if each case of conflict in Africa is complex, the causes of conflicts in Africa are commonly political, geopolitical, economic and social. Africa Faith and Justice Network believes that lasting peace, real democracy and economic prosperity will never be sustainable if African leaders continue to take power by force. The rule of law, accountability, visionary leadership and a strong civil society are imperatives to progress in Africa.

**The Africa Faith and Justice Network**, inspired by the Gospel and informed by Catholic Social Teaching, educates and advocates for just relations with Africa.

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