Beyond Horror in Rwanda and DRC  
- breaking the wall of silence of unprecedented mass violence

Voksenåsen 19th -22nd November 2008

A conference on the roots and ramifications of genocide in Rwanda and the region, and the mass violence that is currently tearing apart the peoples and nations in the Great Lakes region. It is about colonial and post colonial atrocities, warring fractions, greed and the international community’s complicity and negligence in one of history’s most gruesome but sadly still ongoing tragedies. But it is also about the heroic fight for survival and dignity - and the search for a way forward by the peoples in the region.

“Genocides and other mass atrocities are consequences of complex political actions not, as they are often characterised, as simply senseless slaughter based mainly on identity or cultural difference. This means that besides the humanitarian actions to stop or minimise killings, torture and rape of civilians, especially women and children, the crucial challenge to managing or solving them requires political solutions, rooted in participation of all affected persons, truth, power restructuring and reconciliation.”

These words set the tone for the statement submitted from the Voksenåsen conference on Genocide in Nov 2007. Following up the intentions to continue the painful path into investigating ourselves and the challenges we and others are facing to more adequately respond to the ever growing numbers of victims of global, regional and local injustices committed.
Wednesday November 19th
Arrival, foreign participants
20.00 Dinner

Thursday, November 20th
0830-0835
Welcome, Michael Sahlin. Swedish Ambassador to Norway

0835 - 0845
Introduction by Øystein Tveter, chairman of Networkers SouthNorth board

0845 - 1300
A Long and Winding War
The Great Lakes Region, The history, geopolitics, resources, and humanitarian challenges in the 20th century
Francois Houtart - Key-note
Charles Abugre - discussant
Emily Sikazwe - discussant
Venantie Bisimwa Nabintu M - discussant

1100 - 1300
Women and Children in Kivu
Denis Mukwege - Key-note
Mathilde Muhindo - discussant
Lisbet Palme - discussant
Randi Solhjell - discussant
Karen Brouneus - discussant
Chair: Lucy Muyoyeta

1300 - 1400
Lunch

1400 - 1800
The International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda, ICTR
Erik Møse, ICTR
“Judicial Achievements and Remaining Trials”
Hassan Bubacar Jallow
«Prosecutorial Achievements and Remaining Challenges»
Trond Dolva i discussant
Bernt Hagtvet - discussant
Chair Alex Obote-Odora

1900
Dinner
Evening: Special programme

Friday November 21st
0830 - 1030
The Preventable genocide
Ingvar Carlsson - Key-note
Alejandro Bendaña - discussant
Lisbeth Palme - discussant
Venantie Bisimwa Nabintu - discussant

Chair: John Y. Jones

1100 - 1300
Accountability – Complicity in genocide and mass violence
Alex Obote i key note
Francois Houtart - discussant
Emily Sikazwe - discussant

1500 - 1700
Towards a statement

1900
RECEPTION - DINNER

Saturday November 22nd
é continuing if necessary

Sunday November 23rd
Morning:
Excursion Tour for participants continuing into the Conference on Women in the Land of Conflict Nov 23rd - 25th.
Resource persons to the conference:

ALEJANDRO BENDAÑA, professor, director CEI, Centre for International Studies, Nicaragua, former Nicaraguan ambassador to the UN and engaged in UN peace negotiations i.e. in Indonesia, Horn of Africa and Sri Lanka. He is a founding member of Jubilee South and recently co-edited the book Global Justice, The White Man's Burden. He is board member of Networkers SouthNorth.

ALEX OBOTE-ODORA is Chief of the Appeals and Legal Advisory Division (ALAD) in the Office of the Prosecutor for the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. He holds a Doctor of Laws Degree in International Criminal Law and a Master of Laws Degree in International Humanitarian Law from the University of Stockholm in Sweden. Dr. Obote-Odora has taught at, and has been a visiting scholar in many institutions and universities.

BERNT HAGTVET is professor at the University of Oslo, M.Phil. in Social Science from Yale University. Hagtvet is i.a. active in the discourse of European politics, the history and sociology of extreme movements, as well as the study of democracy, human rights, and genocide. He is a prolific writer and deeply engaged in Norwegian popular and professional debate in these fields of interest.

CHARLES ABUGRE is currently the head of policy at Christian Aid. He trained as a development economist and came to Christian Aid from teaching development studies at the University of Wales, Swansea. Abugre comes from Ghana and has headed two of the major NGOs in this country, the Africa secretariat of the Third World Network and the Integrated Social Development Centre (ISODEC).

DENIS MUKWEGE studied medicine in Burundi. After finishing, he worked at the Lemera hospital in South-Kivu DR Congo. And studied gynaecology/obstetrics at the CHU of Angers in France. In 1989, Dr. Mukwege settled at the Hospital of Lemera. During the first civil war of Congo in 1996 the hospital was completely destroyed. As one of the survivors from Lemera, Dr. Mukwege settled in Bukavu, where he now is head of Panzi hospital, providing surgery of vaginal rebuilding and social services for women victims of sexual violence, as well as training nurses, obstetricians and doctors for this end.

EMILY SIKAZWE is the director of Women for Change, a leading Zambian organization dedicated to the empowerment of women. Sikazwe has a Master of Adult Education. She also holds an MSc in Agronomy as well as a Diploma in Community-Based Development and a Certificate in Advocacy and Networking, both from the Coady International Institute.

ERIK MØSE is judge at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR). He was President of the Tribunal (2003-2007). Judge Mose has a long and distinguished career as a human rights jurist and has published extensively in the field of human rights.

FRANÇOIS HOUTART is a sociologist. He has a master's degree in political and social sciences and a PhD in sociology of the Catholic university of Leuven where he served as a professor from 1958 till 1990. He is director of CETRI and a leading member of the World Social Forum.


HENNING MELBER is Director of the Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, Uppsala Sweden, author and researcher, and former Research Director of the Nordic Africa Institute, Uppsala, Sweden. Melber has lived most of his life in Namibia and has covered a number of topics on African history and development. He is Vice President of the International Network on Genocide Scholars.

INGVAR CARLSSON is former Prime Minister of Sweden, and chair of the UN independent inquiry into the actions which the United Nations took at the time of the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

KAREN BROUNEUS is a researcher at the Department of Peace and Conflict research at the University of Uppsala. Brouneus has recently concluded her PhD on the theme: Rethinking reconciliation: Concepts, Methods and an Empirical Study of Truth Telling and Psychological Health in Rwanda.

LISBET PALME, member of The International Panel of Eminent personalities to Investigate the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda and the Surrounding Events. She chaired the UN-sponsored Group of Eminent Women for Namibian and South African Women and Children, and was also a member of the Eminent Persons Group of the International Study on The Impact of Armed Conflicts on Children, led by Mrs Graça Machel. Ms. Palme was an expert member of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
MATHILDE MUHINDO, former member of Parliament in the DRC, and now director of OLAMA, a social assistance agency of the Roman Catholic diocese of Bukavu, on the eastern border of the Democratic Republic of Congo.

RANDI SOLHJELL is a researcher at NUPI, Oslo, with a master’s paper on Sexual Violence in the DRC,

TROND DOLVA is retired judge of the Supreme Court in Norway

VENANTIE BISIMWA NABINTU is the executive secretary of Women’s Network for Justice and Peace (Rfdp) in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). She is a distinguished human rights advocate.

This conference is organized in consultation and collaboration between the following:

THE DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD CENTER FOR PEACE AND GOOD GOVERNANCE is a part of Mindolo Ecumenical Foundation in Kitwe Zambia, and is working with promoting the legacy of Dag Hammarskjöld. An important issue is to develop fieldwork programs in Political Science and Peace-building for youth and students in Africa.

NETWORKERS SOUTH NORTH
Is a network organisation of internationally engaged researchers, writers and civil society representatives focusing on and pursuing Southern perspectives on current global justice-, human rights and development issues.

VOKSENAASEN
is Norway’s national gift to Sweden as a token of gratitude for Swedish aid during and shortly after World War II. Voksenåsen of today is the Swedish centre for Culture and Conferences in Norway and one of the leading in its class. We also arrange our own conferences, seminars and cultural events. Voksenaasen has a substantial collection of art and literature.

THE DAG HAMMARSKJÖLD FOUNDATION was established in Uppsala, Sweden in 1962, in memory of the second Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Foundation deals with cross-cutting global challenges, raising issues, and exploring strategies for change, in areas of Development, Democracy, Peace and Security

Secretariat: registration and accommodation

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Practical information

Apply to: program@voksenaasen.no
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by 9th November

Conference fee NOK 500,- per day. Lunch is included. Additional cost for dinner and accommodation. Students may apply for scholarship to cover conference fee. If you cannot attend but would like the conference report sent to you, contact program@voksenaasen.no or siri.dohlen@voksenaasen.no