

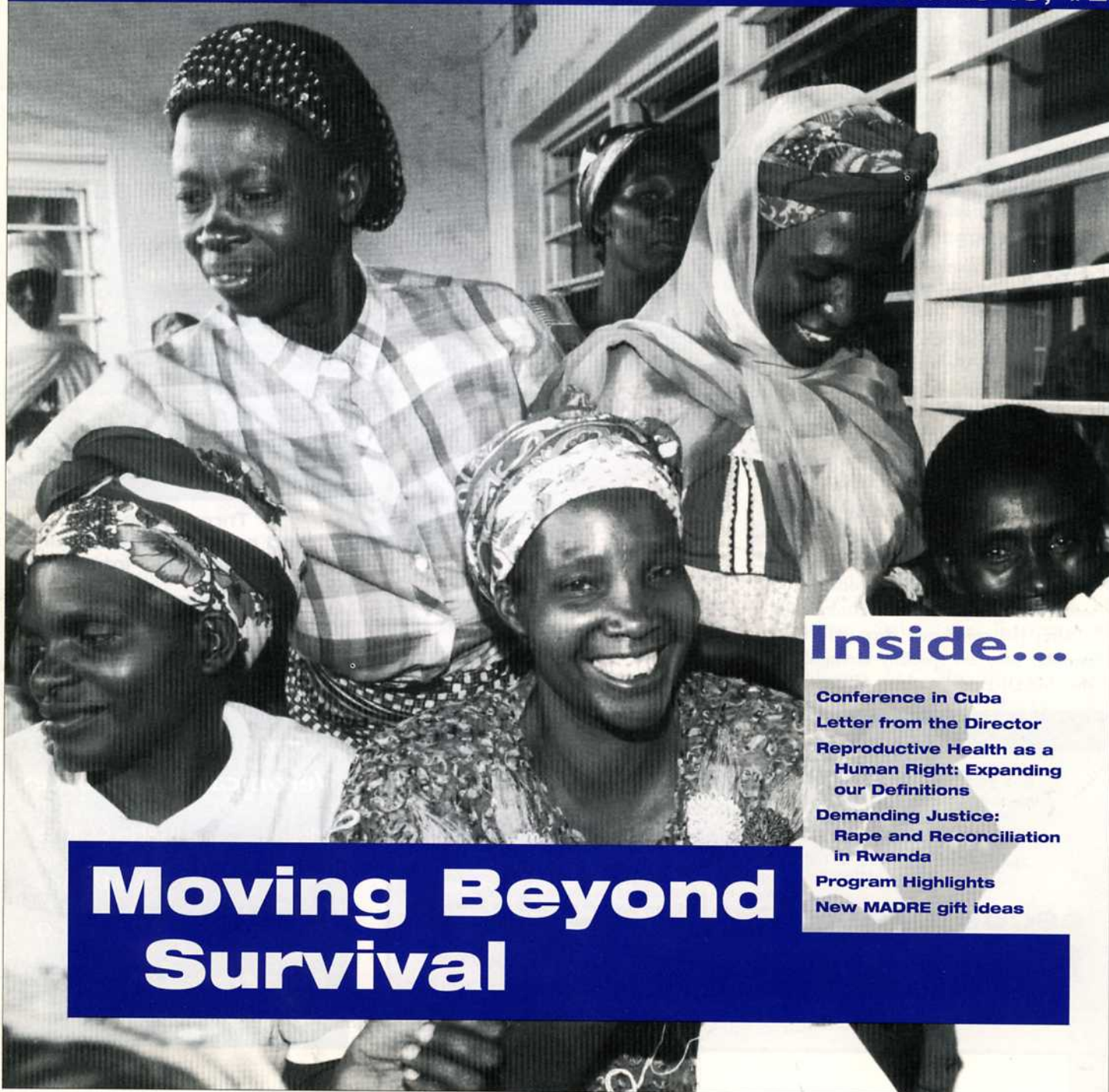
MADRE



speaks

Winter 1997-98

Volume 13, #2



Moving Beyond Survival

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A MADRE Delegation to Cuba



Maddy Miller

MADRE and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom are US-based sponsors of an international women's conference to be held in Havana, April 12 - 19, 1998. We invite you to join the MADRE delegation to this conference, hosted by the Federation of Cuban Women: "MEETING OF SOLIDARITY AMONG WOMEN FOR EQUALITY, DEVELOPMENT AND PEACE."

Discussions will focus on women and sustainable development; political organizing; health and education; violence and discrimination against women; and women and national self-determination.

After the conference there will be a two-day program specially arranged for the MADRE delegation: CHILDREN'S

HEALTH IN CUBA TODAY. It will include visits to a children's rehabilitation center, a school for the visually impaired and a home for severely developmentally disabled children.

DATES: SUNDAY, APRIL 12TH - SUNDAY, APRIL 19TH 1997.

ACCOMMODATIONS: COMFORTABLE HOTEL, DOUBLE OCCUPANCY, POOL AND AIR CONDITIONING.

COST: \$1,050 (SUBJECT TO CHANGE) FROM NASSAU OR CANCUN **INCLUDES:** ROUND TRIP AIRFARE FROM NASSAU OR CANCUN TO HAVANA, HOTEL, BREAKFAST, TRANSPORTATION, TRANSLATION AND PROGRAM. MADRE WILL ALSO APPLY FOR CUBAN VISAS AND TRAVEL LICENSES FROM THE US TREASURY DEPARTMENT.

RAFFLE!

FIRST PRIZE

Win a trip* with the MADRE delegation to the International Women's Conference in Havana.

SECOND PRIZE

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* round-trip travel from Nassau, Bahamas

A contribution of \$25 per raffle ticket (or \$100 for a book of five tickets) is requested.

Contact the MADRE office today for your tickets.

Winning does not guarantee a travel licence from the US Treasury Department, which requires that you have an established interest in the topic of the conference (international women's issues) to qualify for a licence.

For more information on the MADRE delegation and/or the raffle, call the MADRE office at: (212) 627-0444

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MADRE's newsletter, **MADRE Speaks** is published quarterly

MADRE is a 20,000-member, multi-racial, cross-class women's organization that works in partnership with women's community-based organizations worldwide to address issues of women's health, economic development and gender-based human rights. MADRE provides the resources, expertise and organizational support that enable our sister organizations to meet the immediate needs of their communities, while working to change the balance of power to promote social justice.

Newsletter Staff

Yifat Susskind, Editor-in-Chief
Amy Thesing, Design

cover photo:

Women at the MADRE-supported Clinic of Hope in Kigali, Rwanda.

by Laura Flanders

Three cheers
and many thanks to our
Summer 1997 interns

MELIA MARDEN
and
HANNAH ROSENZWEIG

Welcome to the world!
Veronica Lugo Cortés

Mother LILIANA CORTÉS
MADRE Board
of Directors

Father ROBERTO LUGO

Extended Family All the very
proud MADREs

From the Executive Director

Vivian Stromberg

Dear friends,

This issue of *MADRE Speaks* comes on the eve of the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and MADRE's 15th Birthday. Both anniversaries are markers in the history of our quest for a better world, offering a time to evaluate our achievements and define the challenges that lie ahead.

Fifty years ago the world's governments approved the first Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The 1948 document asserts the right to equality between men and women and prohibits all forms of discrimination based on sex. It lays the foundation for an indivisible concept of human rights encompassing political, civil, economic, social and cultural rights. The promise of that declaration—both its contents and its omissions—has fueled a determined international movement working to guarantee those rights to all of us.

In 1975, at the first United Nations Women's Conference in Mexico, an international women's movement was born. Since then, coalitions of women's organizations from around the world have been active at a series of UN conferences addressing the gamut of human rights issues. As part of this movement, MADRE has helped to draft proposed language for documents that define governments' commitments to human rights and we have worked to carve out a space at these conferences for women from our sister organizations:

refugee women, migrants, indigenous, lesbian and poor women; in short, women who have the least access to the process of creating international law, and the most need for the protection these laws are meant to provide.



Laura Flanders

These women have told me again and again that whether they are struggling against the impact of military violence, politically motivated rape or forced displacement, the first step in healing for individual survivors and reconciliation for communities, is recognition of what was done to them. Working to create and improve international mechanisms that can secure this recognition has therefore been part of our commitment to our sisters around the world.

But after 50 years of human rights legislation, we still have not secured international instruments that can move beyond recognition. We need laws and policies that can guarantee justice and, ultimately, prevent violence.

Of course, no human rights document, no matter how perfectly worded, can make a difference in people's lives unless it can be enforced. This issue of *MADRE Speaks* focuses on our work against rape as a weapon of war and our initiatives for women's reproductive health. In both areas we are working to narrow the gap between the intent of the human rights legislation we have fought for and the day-to-day realities of women's lives. Demanding accountability to human rights standards is the challenge we embrace as we celebrate MADRE's 15th birthday.

Let's make 1998, the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a year of increased political commitment. Let's use everything we've learned in MADRE's fifteen years. Let's make sure that women have the chance to speak and be heard. Everywhere. At the United Nations, the Organization of American States, the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda; in Washington, D.C. This year, next year, and every year. Until we have secured a world that we can proudly share with our children and our grandchildren.

Sincerely,

Reproductive Health as a Human Right: Expanding our Definitions

by Elena Arengo



Elena Arengo

Aura Marina, a health promoter with our sister organization, GRUFEPROMEFAM, conducts a workshop for women in Guatemala City.

Madeleine Albright, in her first public appearance as Secretary of State early this year, described how “family planning is an important component of the United States’ foreign policy” (*New York Times*, 2/12/97). Secretary Albright emphasized the importance of “stabilizing population growth rates” in developing nations, and assured Congress that “family planning programs serve our broader interest by elevating the status of women... and reducing the flow of refugees.” Her commentary is instructive, spanning both the rhetoric and the reality of the US government’s interest in women’s reproductive health. While concern about “the status of women” is invoked increasingly in the parlance of government officials and development experts, the dominant approach to reproductive health remains strategic, with women’s bodies serving as sites for policy objectives.

Reproductive health is a right and should not be manipulated as a means of controlling the flow of refugees. But in fact, most modern family planning policy, fueled by alarmist notions of a population “explosion,” has focused myopically on fertility reduction and “population control” as its primary goal. At best, these policies have failed to adequately address issues of global resource distribution and development. At worst, they have served as justifi-

cation for coercive programs targeting poor and marginalized women in countries dominated by the US and Europe. The US-sponsored program to sterilize women in Puerto Rico in order to control the growth of the labor force and immigration in the 1960s is one such policy.

More recently, women’s rights advocates from around the world have insisted on defining the issue of women’s health as one of human rights, reframing reproductive and sexual health as an important theme in international human rights legislation. The International Conference on Population and Development held in Cairo in 1994 provided a major platform for reproductive and sexual health agendas. Its Program of Action, reinforced by the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, challenges the world’s governments to create universal access to a full range of high-quality reproductive health services by the year 2015.

These advances in the international arena have yielded some commitment to reproductive health from development agencies and governments. But



Teaching about HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases is part of MADRE’s health programs.

Liliana Cortés

as Secretary Albright's comments indicate, lip service to women's human rights is often still just that. Much international reproductive health policy still reflects the interests of powerful Northern governments rather than the needs and choices of women and their families. Furthermore, as governments in both the North and South retreat from their responsibilities to provide basic services to their people, women's health care and development programs have been sacrificed. The challenge for those of us who claim women's health as an end in itself is to further the commitment to a conception and realization of reproductive health as a human right.

First, we must understand that injustice, not population growth, is the root of women's poverty. Moreover, poverty and economic inequities have increased over the past 15 years, since the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund have imposed structural adjustment programs on developing countries. These policies require poor countries to reduce spending on social programs and privatize sectors that provide key services to the poor. In Guatemala, for example, the government recently approved a policy of fee-for-service in public hospitals. In a country with an unemployment rate of 53%, this decision is bound to have a negative impact on people's health.

Poor health not only endangers women's individual well-being and the capacity to care for their families. It also severely curtails their ability to fully participate in public and community life, obstructing opportunities for education and political and economic empowerment. Conversely, enjoying a healthy reproductive life, including control over whether, when and how many children to have, is an important basis for exercising other human rights, like the right to education and paid work.

MADRE's Women's Health/Women's Choice reproductive health initiative works to develop both short and long-term strategies to enhance women's choices and to ensure that whatever number of children a woman



Maddy Miller

has, they can each expect to live a full and healthy life.

We believe that any effective health program — especially one dealing with such sensitive topics as sexuality and reproduction — must be developed and implemented from local, culturally appropriate perspectives. Health education and services cannot be “delivered” in a top-down, technocratic manner, but rather, require the active participation of the community. That's why MADRE's reproductive health programs are created in close partnership with our sister organizations in Haiti, Guatemala, Nicaragua and Chiapas, Mexico. These local, community-based women's organizations are best positioned to identify and understand the specific needs of the women and men they serve. Together with them, we support programs that arm women with the information and services they need to make the best decisions for themselves and their families and begin to realize the full range of their human rights. 

MADRE programs link reproductive health to overall improvements in women's lives.

Today, complications related to pregnancy and childbirth are still among the leading causes of mortality for women of reproductive age in many parts of the developing world.

Pregnancy-related deaths claim the lives of approximately half a million women each year, 99 percent of them in the developing world.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the risk of dying from pregnancy or childbirth-related causes is 1 in 20 in the least developed countries, versus 1 in 10,000 in developed regions.

Approximately 200,000 women worldwide die each year due to complications from illegal abortions. Actual numbers are probably much higher since only about half the countries report maternal mortality figures to the WHO.

Sources: Program of Action of the United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 1994. Bandarage, Asoka, *Women, Population and Global Crisis*, Zed Books, New Jersey, 1997, p.8.

DEMANDING JUSTICE: Rape and Reconciliation in Rwanda

by Yifat Susskind

**A nation is never conquered
until the hearts of its women
are on the ground**

—Native American Proverb

One of the most brutal yet invisible forms of violence in many of the countries in which MADRE has worked is the systematic use of rape to serve political ends. Like military violence, rape is a crime that does not end—a crime in perpetuity against survivors, their families and communities, who endure the repercussions indefinitely. Like warfare, rape requires the dehumanization of the person who is targeted. Both kinds of violence aim to humiliate, degrade and subjugate. But the relationship between rape and war exceeds simple analogy. Historically, war-time rape has been used to destroy not only individual women, but entire communities. Because women are situated at the center of both family and cultural reproduction, they become strategic targets when the aim is to eradicate a people. Moreover, survivors of sexual violence face shame and marginalization. Rape on a massive scale therefore corrodes family and community ties, weakening a people's capacity to resist. It is this ability to destroy

community that makes rape such a powerful weapon of war.

When reports of mass rape emerged from the Former Yugoslavia in 1991, women's groups from around the world, including MADRE, moved to activate human rights law to meet the crisis. We argued that, contrary to prevailing legal thought, rape is not incidental to warfare; not a "private" crime against honor or decency, but a form of torture and a gross violation of human rights. As part of a consortium of women's organizations, we successfully pressured the Organization of American States to define rapes committed by agents of the Haitian military as torture, and therefore, in violation of international law. Based on this precedent, the UN tribunal on the Former Yugoslavia reversed an earlier ruling and finally recognized rape as a war crime and, under certain circumstances, an act of genocide. This trail-blazing work was spearheaded by the International Women's Human Rights Law Clinic at the City University of New York School of Law.

These are achievements to be celebrated, but they are not permanent victories. This fact has become painfully clear since the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunal on

Rwanda (ICTR) in November 1994. The ICTR was created to investigate and punish war crimes committed during the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, when nearly one million Tutsi were slaughtered in 100 days. Central to both the ideology and execution of the genocide was the mass rape and sexual mutilation of women and girls. Yet, as of this writing, the ICTR has not brought even one perpetra-

tor of rape to justice. A closer look at this failure underscores the work that lies ahead in the fight against rape as a weapon of war.

THE FAILURE OF JUSTICE

Despite the tens of thousands of rapes committed during the Rwandan genocide, the ICTR has neglected to investigate, much less prosecute, sexual violence. Only in June 1997, after international pressure from a coalition of women's groups, did the ICTR finally amend a single indictment to include charges of rape. After questioning at trial, it was discovered that two of the witnesses had previously omitted evidence of rape because they had not been asked.

Though it is within the ICTR's mandate, rape is treated as a secondary offense, reflecting and reinforcing pervasive ignorance about sexual violence among ICTR staff. Survivors have expressed repeatedly that they are uncomfortable describing their ordeals to men. Yet there are few women investigators or translators at the tribunal. Investigators are not adequately trained to work with rape survivors. Instead, they rely on the standard human rights model of documenting testimony: "specific, intrusive and repetitive questioning." This is how one internationally respected human rights organization claims to guarantee the validity of its evidence—hardly an approach conducive to enabling a rape survivor to speak about her experience.

Even women who might be willing to endure such questioning are excluded from the justice process by the ICTR's method of gathering witnesses. Ignoring criticism from Rwandan women's organizations, teams of foreign, male UN investigators continue to travel from village to village in Rwanda, publicly inquiring if anyone



A human rights training at the MADRE-supported Clinic of Hope in Kigali.

there has been raped. This, despite the fact that anonymity is a necessity for women who, if publicly identified as rape survivors, are likely to be shunned by their communities and lose their homes and livelihood.

The most treacherous defect of the tribunal is its lack of witness protection. Since its inception, people rumored to be cooperating with the ICTR have been harassed, threatened and, in several cases, assassinated. Over 200 genocide survivors have been killed this year alone, in attacks that many Rwandans characterize as attempts to prevent them from testifying before the tribunal. Despite these dangers, the ICTR only instituted a witness protection program this year. The program is still largely fictional. Only one staff person is assigned to witness protection for the entire city of Kigali, and the national unit has yet to even outline its approach to the issue.

A corollary to the physical danger is the lack of emotional support for witnesses. Victims' advocates and mental health workers involved in South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission emphasize the importance of psychological support for witnesses who relive the horror of brutal assault during testimonies. Rwandan women also tell of renewed nightmares, hallucinations and emotional breakdowns after testifying before the tribunal. Every interview tears open old psychological wounds, yet the ICTR has made no provisions for counseling services of any kind.

The tribunal's miserable record on rape is part of a larger dysfunction rooted in chaotic management, bureaucratic infighting and a lack of qualified staff and resources. There are no computers in the ICTR headquarters in Arusha; no running transcript of hearings; no legal researchers or library.

Laura Flanders



A woman who survived the genocide tells her story to Vivian Stromberg.

Investigators often fail to follow up on cases even after people have risked their safety to meet with them. And many people report being treated with disrespect and callousness by ICTR staff. A growing number of Rwandans attribute this

bungling to a lack of international political will to empower the tribunal. The result—arbitration without justice—amounts to another type of violence perpetrated against genocide survivors.

PRIORITIZING WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHTS

More and more Rwandans characterize the tribunal as recklessly inept, offering genocide survivors no real benefit, while putting them at risk of assault and renewed emotional trauma. The frustration has led several women's organizations to stop cooperating with the tribunal. These activists reject the claim of the ICTR that the tribunal has been unable to prosecute rape because survivors refuse to come forward. Instead, they say, women would thankfully utilize the system if they only had some indication that the tribunal would actually punish rapists and provide witnesses with a minimum of respect, safety and psychological support.

Meeting these conditions will require a combined effort of human rights advocacy at the international level and the work of community-based women's organizations serving rape survivors. Achieving national reconciliation in the wake of genocide is an historic challenge demanding international mechanisms of justice. But such structures will remain abstract and unaccountable if they are not rooted in the conditions of people's daily lives. This is a lesson we have learned repeatedly through our work in

NOTHING TO GAIN, NOTHING VENTURED

Historically, the US role in Central Africa has been defined by either Cold War-era support for regimes that buffered Soviet influence (most notably the dictatorship of Mobutu Sese Seko in Zaire) or more recently, countries like Uganda, that offer profits to US corporations. In 1994, when genocide was unleashed in the small, impoverished nation of Rwanda, the US was compelled by neither strategic nor commercial interest. Instead it was guided by the memory of the botched 1993 intervention in Somalia, where the death of 18 US troops caused a public relations disaster for the Clinton Administration. Despite its ability—and legal obligation—to prevent and later stop the genocide, the US government did neither. Its policy before, during and after the slaughter indicated clearly that in the calculus of US national self-interest, Rwanda was deemed dispensable.

BEFORE

- The US provided economic and military aid to the extremist Hutu regime and supported its most racist party, the Coalition for the Defense of the Republic, which openly espoused annihilation of the Tutsi.
- US Ambassador to Rwanda David Rawson repeatedly ignored written evidence of a genocide plan presented to him by Tutsi leaders.

DURING

- US Ambassador to the UN Madeleine Albright demanded a reduction in the number of UN peacekeeping troops in Rwanda from 2,500 to 270. At the same time, the head of the UN force in Rwanda reported that the genocide could easily be stopped with about 6,000 UN troops.
- The US obstructed the eventual deployment of UN troops for an entire month while haggling over payment for the use of its armored personnel carriers. It is estimated that 300,000 people were killed during this time.
- The State Department banned US officials from using the term "genocide" to describe the killings. To do so would have obligated the US to intervene under the 1948 Genocide Convention.

AFTER

- Official US discourse constructed the genocide as a purely humanitarian, rather than political crisis. The US was thus able to mask its criminal "neutrality" and suggest that providing blankets and water, instead of political action and justice, was the most, rather than the least, that could be done.
- As part of a larger trend of violating its financial commitment to the UN, the US has withheld funding and resources from the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda.

other communities devastated by human rights abuses, including war-time rape.

Building on our experiences in Central America, Haiti, the Middle East and elsewhere, MADRE is now working in Rwanda to bridge the gap between international law and local needs. Within the framework of the ICTR we are calling for the tribunal to: establish a real witness protection program; hire qualified women investigators; train staff to address the specific needs of rape survivors; and amend existing indictments to include charges of rape where necessary.

One of the best ways to make the ICTR more responsive to the needs of survivors is to integrate local women's organizations into the work of the tribunal. So far, most of Rwanda's highly functional and well-organized women's associations have had little or no communication with the ICTR. Pro-Femmes, a Kigali-based umbrella organization of 35 women's groups, has never even been contacted by the tribunal. Yet organizations like Pro-Femmes have much to offer, both to women wishing to participate in the justice process, and to the tribunal itself. These are indigenous organizations that have been working with women and their families since the genocide. They understand the reality of women's lives and the problems they face. These groups can provide women who want to testify with the support they need and the respect they deserve.

The ICTR and similar international mechanisms should be guided by these kinds of community-based organizations. A partnership of local knowledge and international political clout might actually produce a framework capable of both prosecuting war criminals and identifying the policies and conditions that led to genocide. Using a model of human rights work that prioritizes the experience of embattled communities reveals a critical truth: the horror of war-time rape is rivaled only by the incredible courage of survivors. The leadership of these women is crucial to creating the changes needed for them to rebuild their country in peace and move forward with their lives in dignity.



Tribal Warfare or Colonial Legacy?

Contrary to mainstream media pronouncements about "ancient tribal hostilities" in Rwanda, political violence there is directly linked to European rule. Before colonization in 1897, the terms Hutu and Tutsi designated mutable economic status, signifying class as much as ethnicity. European "divide and rule" tactics manipulated and entrenched these categories, setting the stage for the first systematic violence between Hutu and Tutsi. Initially, members of the Tutsi minority (about 15% of the population) were privileged as colonial administrators. Meanwhile, European "race science" inculcated the idea of an essential difference between the groups, despite their shared language and culture and high rates of intermarriage. In the 1930's, Belgium imposed an apartheid-like system of "ethnic" identity cards, making Hutu and Tutsi fixed categories. These cards, still in use in 1994, became the means by which Hutu extremists selected Tutsis for annihilation.

After independence in 1962, Rwanda's economy continued to be dominated by France. In the 1980's, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) imposed structural adjustment programs to adapt Rwanda's economy to Western interests. Wages were frozen and the national currency was devalued twice, each time by 50%. Despite the ensuing economic crisis, most Hutu and

Tutsi in the impoverished countryside continued to coexist and even intermarry. But among the educated elite of each group, competition for scarce jobs became fierce. The 1994 genocide that was led by members of the Hutu ruling class can be understood, in part, as a product of this economic conflict.

By the early 1990's, Rwanda's repressive Hutu-led government was under tremendous pressure from growing internal opposition to stringent IMF reforms. Meanwhile, the Rwanda Patriotic Front, a Uganda-based Tutsi refugee army which sought to oust the Hutu regime and pave the way for the return of 800,000 exiled Tutsis, was gaining strength and support. Desperate to retain power, the government scapegoated the Tutsis for Rwanda's political and economic problems and instigated ethnic hatred as a means of garnering political support from the Hutu majority.

Hutu leaders orchestrated a virulent propaganda campaign, focusing in part on the "dangerous" and "arrogant" sexuality of Tutsi women, whose rape was explicitly presented as a means of destroying the Tutsi people and asserting Hutu control over Rwanda. When the government directed the Hutu population to rise up and kill all Tutsis, the conditions for genocide and mass rape were firmly in place. European and US inaction enabled the killers to proceed unhindered.

Creating Today's Human Rights Agenda: Recent Books by MADRE Supporters

Women, Poverty and AIDS: Sex, Drugs and Structural Violence explains how sexism and economic exploitation combine to put poor women at the greatest risk for HIV infection worldwide. Drawing on women's actual life experiences, this book demonstrates that social justice is as important as medical science in the fight against AIDS. (Paul Farmer, Margaret Connors and Janie Simmons, eds., Common Courage Press, 1996). \$19.95 + \$3 shipping & handling (s&h).

Empowerment & Women's Health: Theory, Methods and Practice explores the relationships between international development policies, health and women's social and political organizing, and offers critical new models of programming and research to improve women's lives. (Jane Stein, Zed Books, 1997). \$16.95 + \$3 s&h.

Real Majority. Media Minority spans ten years of writings by media analyst, independent journalist and feminist activist Laura Flanders. These essays target the distortions and erasures of women's lives and perspectives in mainstream media with eloquence, rage and wit. (Laura Flanders, Common Courage Press, 1997). \$16.95 + \$3 s&h.

Calling the Shots: How Washington Dominates Today's UN: discusses the gap between the UN's mission to defend democracy and national self-determination and the reality of Washington's use of the UN as an arm of US foreign policy. (Phyllis Bennis, Olive Branch Press, 1996). \$20 (hard cover) + \$3 s&h.

ALL BOOKS AVAILABLE FROM THE MADRE OFFICE



MADRE Program Highlights

SHIPMENT TO HAITI

A medical shipment valued at \$200,000 will arrive in Port-au-Prince in November. Organized jointly by MADRE and Grassroots International, the delivery includes equipment for an on-site laboratory for KLINIK FANM, which will enable the clinic to conduct basic blood and urine tests. With the new lab KLINIK FANM will be able to offer patients quicker, less expensive diagnoses and generate income by providing low-cost services to other area clinics. A woman from the KLINIK FANM community will be trained and hired as the laboratory technician. Also included in the shipment are a range of much-needed medicines and medical supplies, including antibiotics, treatments for skin diseases, hypertension and vaginal infections, nutritional supplements, condoms and bandages.

RWANDAN WOMEN: Healing Their Lives and Rebuilding Their Country

Over the past six months MADRE has developed a strong working partnership and friendship with the women of the Clinic of Hope. The Kigali-based project, providing health care, counseling and economic development programs for women survivors of rape and genocide, is one of the only centers in Rwanda used by both Tutsi and Hutu women—survivors and returning refugees alike. As such, the clinic provides both desperately-needed services and a framework for reconciliation, which is perhaps the greatest challenge facing Rwandans today.

In May, Vivian Stromberg was invited to Rwanda by Peace Bikunda, the clinic's director. Together with journalist, radio producer and long-time MADRE member Laura Flanders, Vivian traveled to genocide sites throughout the country, speaking with survivors and families returning from exile in then-Zaire. Meetings with government officials, women's organizations and investigators at the International Criminal Tribunal on Rwanda (ICTR) furthered our understanding of events in Rwanda. The visit enabled us to clarify MADRE's role in helping to provide for immediate needs, like health care and employment.

Paulette Paul, a nurse and KLINIK FANM's manager, examines new laboratory equipment with Vivian Stromberg and Ellen Israel, a nurse-midwife who helped found KLINIK FANM through MADRE's training and technical assistance program, Sisters Without Borders.



Dawn Pinnock

COMBATING RAPE AS A WEAPON OF WAR: A National Speaking Tour

Vivian Stromberg and Dr. Lise Marie Dejean, Haiti's first Minister of Women's Affairs and Medical Director of KLINIK FANM, will conduct a national speaking tour from November 10 - 21. They will visit New York City, Seattle, San Francisco, Sacramento, Santa Cruz, Oakland, Middleburg, VA, and Washington, D.C. to discuss MADRE's work with our Haitian partner organization SOFA (Haitian Women in Solidarity). The tour will focus on MADRE and SOFA's work to combat politically motivated rape in Haiti by providing health care, demanding justice and supporting local women's leadership.



A MADRE delegation delivers toys to Casa Castellana, a treatment center for developmentally disabled young people in Havana.

Initial support from MADRE members was used for concrete, urgent needs. Two women who were severely mutilated during the genocide were able to undergo surgery. We supplied the Clinic of Hope with medication to treat infections, skin diseases and other ailments exacerbated by poverty and the social isolation faced by rape survivors. We also equipped a play center for children who accompany their moms to the clinic. The next step is to ask Rwandan women how we can best support their longer-term efforts to secure justice, health care and economic development for themselves and their children.


MADRE member support also enabled us to send a human rights worker, Connie Walsh, previously with the OAS/UN Civil Mission in Haiti, to

document the testimonies of rape survivors and to study some of the shortcomings of the ICTR. Her work is part of MADRE's efforts to support women wishing to participate in the justice process and to pressure the ICTR to be a safer, more effective instrument of justice for Rwandan women.

CUBA

MADRE is gearing up for our annual Toys & Medicines for Kids in Cuba Campaign. This year's shipment, focusing on children living with AIDS and other infectious diseases, includes AIDS therapies which cannot be obtained in Cuba because of the US embargo and supplies for Cuba's childhood immunization program, which has been disrupted by the embargo.

We are now collecting toys for the campaign. Please contact the MADRE office to find out how you can participate.

In August Vivian Stromberg, who is president of the US + CUBA Medical Project as well as MADRE's Executive Director, led a delegation of 70 to a conference in Havana: "Sexuality and HIV/AIDS in Cuba, Latin American and the Caribbean." Organized by the Cuban Institute for Tropical Medicine and Infectious Disease, the conference participants included health professionals, social workers, educators, HIV/AIDS activists and people living with AIDS. 

SISTERS WITHOUT BORDERS

MADRE is looking for qualified, fluent Spanish or Haitian Creole/French speakers to do training and technical assistance with members of our sister organizations.

CONTACT THE MADRE OFFICE FOR MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.MADRE.org>

Visit MADRE's new website at:

MADRE Web Page

an international women's human rights organization



overview



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voices



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new



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