

MAJOR EXPANSION AND APPLICATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS RULES SINCE UDHR

All human rights topics enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights have been elaborated upon under major topics such as social, cultural, political, civil and economic rights.

During the 1950s and 1960s, more and more countries joined the UN and upon joining formally accepted the obligations contained in the UN Charter, and in doing so subscribed to the principles and ideals laid down in the UDHR

In recent years, the UDHR has been backed up by a large number of international conventions the most significant of which are the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

The above two covenants together with the UDHR form the International Bill of Human Rights.

Non-Governmental Organizations (NGO's) such as Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch promote human rights and denounce human-rights abuses.

In addition, HR abuses around the world are monitored and documented by independent investigators ("Special Rapporteurs") appointed by the UN Human Rights Council, which, in turn, rebukes cited nations for their human-rights failures.

In Europe, the supranational European Court of Human Rights, was established by the Council of Europe, is intended to protect individual human rights from government abuse.

African, Asian and Latin American nations have also established rules for the protection of human rights and the punishments of transgressors

The indictment and arrest in 2000 in Senegal of former Chadian president Hissène Habré for human-rights violations during his presidency is another case in point. In the Habré case, the charges were initially dropped, but he was rearrested on a Belgian warrant.

Hissène Habré



Former Yugoslav President Slobodan Milosevic was the first sitting head of state to be charged with war crimes on May 27, 1999 by the U.N's International Criminal Tribunal for alleged atrocities in Kosovo. Milosevic's transgressions were mass murder and planning a systematic campaign of ethnic cleansing. He was arraigned with criminal acts numbering 66 counts, including genocide and crimes against humanity

Details of Milosevic's alleged crimes included forced expulsion of 800,000 Albanians from Kosovo in 1999, which led to very intense NATO bombing campaign.

He was accused of planning and ordering his army and police to commit mass murder in Racak, Kosovo.

He was also accused of ordering Europe's worst atrocity since the Second World War, the mass murder of 7,000 Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica in July 1995.

Starving Bosnian Muslim inmates



Well-Fed President Slobodan Milosevic



Milosevic died in detention (suicide suspected) on March 11, 2006, while on trial before the United Nations' International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague.

The trial had lasted four years at the time of his death. The tribunal formally closed proceedings against Milosevic on March 14, 2006

Then, Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia was indicted on criminal charges.

Charles Taylor



Taylor, a war lord, became president of Liberia on August 2, 1997 after years of civil war and an election in which there was an implicit threat that Taylor would resume the war unless he was elected.

During the war in Sierra Leone, which killed tens of thousands of civilians, Taylor was implicated in supporting the brutal rebel groups the

Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the RUF/Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) alliance, which killed, raped, and cut off the limbs of thousands of people.

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The AFRC also forcibly recruited thousands of child soldiers.

Taylor allegedly supported the groups by trading diamonds for arms, allowing them to continue terrorizing civilians.

After years of enjoying safe haven in Nigeria, he was apprehended in March 2006 and transferred to The Hague for trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in June 2006

The Special Court indicted Taylor for serious crimes committed during the Sierra Leone conflict.

Taylor's limbless victims:



Taylor has been found guilty of aiding and abetting war crimes during the brutal civil war in neighbouring Sierra Leone and sentenced to 50 years in prison.

He becomes the first former head of state to be convicted of war crimes by an international court since the Nuremburg trials of Nazis after World War II.

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