

International Women's Day 2014 - Inspiring Change

Ollie Davies

March 12, 2014

Universal Peace Federation - UK

Committee Room No. 3, House of Lords



Hosted by Rt. Hon. Baroness Verma: Under Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change

Baroness Meral Hussein-Ece: Gender and Equalities Spokesperson for Liberal Democrats in the House of Lords and the only parliamentarian from a Turkish background: 'The Lack of Women Representatives in Parliament Especially From BME Backgrounds'

Sir Anand Satyanand: Chairman of Commonwealth Foundation: 'Women of the Commonwealth in the Advance of Civil Society' Photos of the event



Ms. Anjum Anwar MBE: Chair of Women's Voice, Interfaith Officer for Blackburn Cathedral

Baroness Verma: 'Inspiring change: Can There be Peace Without Women?'

Ms. Justina Mutale: African Woman of the Year 2012, Hon. Ambassador for Gender Equality, International Women's Think Tank & International Women's Centre: 'Daring the Difference to Bridge the Gender Gap: Enabling Women to Participate'

Ms Lee Travers: Author of "Inspiring Women Leaders", Kezi Silverstone Foundation & Hope For Teenage Mothers

Marsha Thompson: Youth Liaison Officer for Shout Out UK: 'Message To Our Daughters'

Genocide in the Democratic Republic of Congo: Blood Rubber to Blood Metals

Justina Mutale

March 21, 2014

Universal Peace Federation and Mothers of Congo Event

Lancaster Gate, London



I would like to start by quoting Edmund Burke, who once said, "The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men (and good women) to do nothing."

The issue of the genocide in the Congo is not just another African story. It is a global issue. The lives and deaths of millions of innocent Congolese people, the death of these innocent men, women and children are directly linked to each and every one of us gathered here tonight. In fact, in this age of modern technology, the lives and deaths of our Congolese brothers and sisters and their children are linked to each and every person on the planet who uses modern technology or benefits from its advantages.

The Congo produces almost 80% of the Coltan in the world and coltan is critical to the high technology circuitry found in mobile phones and computers and other popular electronics. Please remember that each time we use a mobile phone, a video game console, a computer, or simply open a can of baked beans or any other canned foods for that matter, we hold the lives and deaths of our Congolese brothers and sisters and their children in our hands.

We all need to understand the unimaginable scale of human suffering, death, and destruction that occurs in the Congo just so we can have the privilege of modern technology. Every day millions of children, children as young as three and five years old are forced to crawl into underground mines on their hands and knees to dig for Coltan.

These children are constantly at risk of abuse and exploitation. Statistics indicate that more than two million children have died in the past ten years from mine related accidents and those that have survived remain extremely vulnerable. The Congo has been highlighted as a country with the worst form of Child Labor in the world. The Congo has also been highlighted as one of the top countries in the world with the highest number of child soldiers.

According to statistics, the death toll in the Congo has exceeded over 10 million, while 5 million Congolese people have been displaced, creating over 13 million orphans and abandoned children. Analysts have stated that the Congo genocide has been the deadliest human catastrophe since World War

The loss of life in the Congo far exceeds deaths in Iraq, Afghanistan and Darfur combined.

And yet this genocide has gone largely un-noticed to the outside world, while our Congolese brothers and sisters and their children are left with lives exposed to brutality, death and disease. Hollow eyed children roam the streets of the Congo barefoot, wearing dirty, threadbare clothes, while women are raped by the militia and by the peace keeping forces, and displaced villagers live among piles of human bones as refugees forced to flee their homes.

This is not a distant tragedy. A report by the Panel of Experts at the United Nations Security Council states that the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has become mainly about access, control and trade of key resources such as coltan, diamonds, copper, cobalt, gold and tin. The merciless exploitation of women and children take place every single day, leading to death just so we can have the technological advancements that humanity now believes we cannot live without.

This exploitation and deprivation continues under the very watchful eye of the United Nations peacekeeping forces, who are entrusted with keeping peace in the Congo, a peace that does not exist. One wonders how a decade of death and destruction, six times that of the Rwandan genocide could be allowed to take place just across the border from Rwanda. While the world bemoans the horror that happened in Rwanda, they paid very little or no attention to the ongoing slaughter of innocent people in the Congo.

Despite being endowed with rich natural resources, the Congolese people rank among the poorest and most exploited in the world as the wealth of the Congo only serves to provide safe havens for foreign armies and militia and to create business opportunities for multi-national corporations, criminal gangs, thieves and rapists.

Rape has become so common place in the Congo that the country has been dubbed “the rape capital of the world”. In fact, rape has been termed as a silent war against women. Rape has been used to destroy women, their families and whole communities in the Congo and to ensure that communities accept the power and authority of the perpetrators who exercise terror by using rape as a weapon of war. The prevalence and intensity of rape and other sexual violence in the Congo has been described as the worst in the world. The war has made the life of women more precarious and violence against women seems to be the order of the day.

This violence against women contravenes virtually every known fundamental human right of women and the girl child. It violates their right to dignity, right to health (especially reproductive health), right to personal liberty, right to peaceful assembly and association, right to be free from discrimination, right to private and fairly life, and virtually all other freedoms as listed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In fact, our brothers and sisters and their children in the Congo do not enjoy much of the Human Rights as indicated in the Universal Declaration which reads in part:

“Whereas recognition of inherent dignity; equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world”. Article: 2 of the Declaration states that “Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms Set forth in this declaration, without distinction of any kind”, while Article 4 states that: “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude” and Article 5 states: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment”.

Events in the Congo seem to suggest that our Congolese brothers and sisters and their children are not part of the human family referred to in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as they are left out of all international instruments that should protect them, in favour of technological advancement.

Resolution 1325 of the United Nations Security Council stipulates measures to protect women and girls from gender-based violence, particularly rape and other forms of sexual abuse, in situations of armed conflict. The application of Resolution 1325 has totally been ignored in the case of the Congolese women.

And so has the “Responsibility to Protect”, which stipulates that if the state fails to protect its citizens from genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, ethnic cleansing and other mass atrocities, the international community has the responsibility to intervene using appropriate diplomatic, humanitarian and other means such as economic sanctions to protect populations from these crimes. We are yet to see these economic sanctions on the Congo.

The principles of a “Just War” where innocent people and civilians should not be harmed and where internationally agreed conventions regulating war must be obeyed, are not even given a second thought.

The misery, suffering, and humiliation of our Congolese brothers and sisters and their children is irreparable. Reports indicate that almost half of the people killed in the Congo are children under the age of 5. We must begin to collectively help our brothers and sisters in the Congo as hope for positive change can only come from ordinary people like you and I.

Whether we pretend to be unaware that the lives of the Congolese people are in our hands or not, deep down in our hearts, as members of the human family, we know what is happening in the Congo is unacceptable. It is time humanity rose up to turn things around in the Congo.

Whether we like it or not, we have a collective responsibility to leave the world a better place than we found it. Let us not sit on the fence. We all need to be constructive and proactive, to seek a common solution to prevent a global disaster, which we can all see unfolding in the Congo right before our very own eyes.

I believe that every human deserves human dignity. Employing technological, political and economic advancements will only be beneficial if we seek the welfare of all human beings. If human beings rely only on material development, we cannot be sure of a positive outcome.

As indicated by the Dalai Lama, in the midst of all the technological advancements, the planet desperately more peacemakers, healers, restorers, and lovers of humanity.

Human beings are the only species with the potential to decide the fate of the world and humanity, and we need to cultivate contentment and simplicity in our lives. This is why developing sincere concern for others gives us peace of mind; it brings with it trust and a sense of peace. Through service to others and time spent serving others, we are provided with the chance to find unity in the diversity of the gifts with which God has blessed us.

Justina Mutale
African Woman of the Year 2012
Gender Equality Ambassador and Spokesperson
International Women’s Think Tank and International Women’s Centre

DRC: From Genocide to Recovery - Africa Needs Strong Women

Charlotte Simon
March 21, 2014



A WOMAN HAS ALWAYS BEEN A PILLAR OF A SOCIETY. SHE IS A WIFE, A MOTHER AND A CARER. I AM AMAZED BY THE LOAD A WOMAN CAN CARRY. IN AFRICA, I HAVE SEEN WOMEN CARRY SUCH A BIG LOAD ON THEIR BACKS COMING FROM THE FIELD, A LOAD BIGGER THAN THEIR NORMAL HEIGHT JUST SO THEY COULD CATER FOR THEIR FAMILIES. IN EUROPE I HAVE SEEN WOMEN WORK SO HARD JUGGLING BETWEEN THEIR JOBS AND HOME TO KEEP THEIR FAMILIES HAPPY.

THE EXAMPLE OF MY FRIEND MARGARET EVEN WHEN SHE IS AT WORK, SHE ALWAYS MAKES SURE EVERYTHING IS PERFECT AT HOME. ON THE 11th OF JULY 2009 IN ACCRA, GHANA PRESIDENT OBAMA

DELIVERED A SPEECH. I QUOTE, "AFRICA DOESN'T NEED STRONG MEN, IT NEEDS STRONG INSTITUTIONS", BUT I AM SAYING THAT AFRICA NEEDS STRONG WOMEN. HUMMM...MAYBE MEN? (I WILL THINK ABOUT THAT ONE.)

TO PAVE THE WAY ON BUILDING A PEACEFUL AND STRONG AFRICA, AFRICAN MEN CAN'T KEEP IGNORING THE POTENTIAL OF AFRICAN WOMEN. AN OLD SAYING IS THAT "BEHIND EVERY SUCCESSFUL MAN THERE IS A GOOD WOMAN". NOW, IN AFRICA WE NEED SOME GOOD MEN TO STAND BEHIND GOOD WOMEN". A WOMEN'S ROLE IN SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA IS IMPORTANT BUT LIMITED. THEY ARE CAPABLE OF MUCH MORE. THERE IS A NEED TO INVOLVE WOMEN IN GOVERNMENT TO A MUCH GREATER EXTENT. WOMEN ARE A PART OF THE FUTURE OF AFRICA.

ACCORDING TO UN STATISTICS, 48 WOMEN ARE RAPED IN DRC EVERY HOUR. THAT IS 1,152 A DAY AND 414,720 A YEAR. OVER THE PAST 18 YEARS OF RWANDA AND UGANDA CONTINUED INVASION, APPROXIMATELY 7.6 MILLION WOMEN HAVE BEEN RAPED AND MORE THAN 10,000,000 PEOPLE HAVE DIED.

AFRICA DOESN'T NEED DICTATORS AS HEAD OF STATE BUT MEN AND WOMEN WHO ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE WELL-BEING OF ITS PEOPLE. WE MUST CHALLENGE AND DENOUNCE THOSE LEADERS WHO CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION TO CLING ONTO POWER, ABUSE HUMAN RIGHTS, USE TORTURE AND MURDER TO INTIMIDATE THEIR OPPONENTS.

WE HAVE THE POWER TO SAY NO AND TO HOLD OUR LEADERS ACCOUNTABLE FOR THE MISTREATMENT OF THEIR PEOPLE, DENOUNCE A CULTURE OF CORRUPTION, AND BUILD INSTITUTIONS THAT SERVE THE PEOPLE. BUT THESE THINGS CAN BE DONE ONLY IF WE TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR FUTURE.

I KNOW IT WON'T BE EASY. IT WILL TAKE TIME AND EFFORT. THERE WILL BE SUFFERING AND SETBACKS BUT I AM SURE WE CAN ACHIEVE IT. IN THE PAST 20 YEARS, WOMEN IN DRC HAVE BEEN THROUGH TREMENDOUS SUFFERING BUT I BELIEVE EDUCATION CAN HELP CHANGE LIVES. I BELIEVE EDUCATION IS THE KEY FOR A BETTER FUTURE FOR THE WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF CONGO IN PARTICULAR AND AFRICA IN GENERAL. WOMEN OF AFRICA NEED TO KNOW THAT THEY HAVE RIGHTS; RIGHTS NOT ONLY FOR BEING A WIFE OR MOTHER BUT THE RIGHT TO KNOW SHE IS PART OF SOCIETY. THE DIGNITY OF EVERY WOMAN IN DRC MUST BE RESTORED. WE CAN ONLY ACHIEVE THIS IF WE WORK TOGETHER AS MOTHERS FOR THE FUTURE OF AFRICA



Conflict Minerals: International Response

Mothers of Congo

Universal Peace Federation-UK @ukUPF

March 21st 2014

43 Lancaster Gate, London, W2 3NA

Conflict Minerals International Response



- United States - Dodd-Frank Act 1502
- Obliges US Stock Exchange Listed Companies to Ensure Supply Chain is not Tainted by Conflict Minerals
- Being Challenged in Courts
- There Are Still Positive Effects

Conflict Minerals – International Response

USA Dodd-Frank Law

- Section 1502 provisions are enforceable as of 31 May 2014, by which time affected companies must submit their first annual conflict minerals reports to the US Securities and Exchange Commission
- It is estimated that 150,000-200,000 EU companies - mostly downstream firms - are involved in the supply chains of the 6,000 affected US-listed companies. ([More Info](#))

Conflict Minerals - International Response

- **Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Due Diligence Guidance for Responsible Supply Chains of Minerals from Conflict-Affected and High-Risk Areas**



- <http://www.oecd.org/>

Conflict Minerals - International Response



- **26-28 May 2014 – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Conference Centre, Paris, France**
- To review and discuss implementation of the [OECD Due Diligence Guidance](#) and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region [Regional Certification Mechanism](#).
- Tin, tantalum and tungsten (3Ts) and gold supply chains Issues will be addressed.

Conflict Minerals - International Response

March 5th 2014 Announcement of EU Proposed Regulations

- 1) Opt-In Self Certification – Voluntary
- 2) Mineral Importers Only – Not Manufacturers
- 3) Review in Three Years ([More Info](#))

Feb 26, 2014, the European Parliament voted in support of binding EU rules that ensure that all companies operating in the EU, using minerals sourced from conflict-affected areas, check their supply chains to reduce the risk of conflict financing and human rights abuses.

Seema Joshi, Amnesty's business and human rights director, said the plan was "substantially weaker" than existing standards set by the OECD and already endorsed by EU governments.



Conflict Minerals- International Response

“The EU legislation against conflict-minerals if enacted as watered down as it is, it will simply be a shame for EU legislators and a disappointment for those who saw the EU initiative as support for the rights of women and children to be protected from militia's, or for impoverished, exploited miners in eastern DRC who now will not see their incomes rise”,

Fidel Bafilemba, a Congo-based researcher for the Enough Project.



Conflict Minerals - International Response

International Tin Research
Institute (ITRI)

based in St Albans initiated

iTSCi

(ITRI Tin Supply Chain Initiative)

www.itri.co.uk



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**World Gold
Council -
Head Office
London**

www.gold.org/

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United Nations - Businesses and Human Rights

Good Business –
[Implementing the
UN Guiding
Principles \(UNGPs\)
on Business and
Human Rights](#)

Sept 2013

UK Foreign Office



Conflict Minerals International Response

UK National Contact Point (NCP) for Questions or Complaints About Conflict Minerals

- Questions or complaints – OECD guidelines, or UK NCP's mailing list uk.ncp@bis.gsi.gov.uk
- UK National Contact Point for OECD guidelines for multinational Enterprises:
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS), 3rd Floor - Victoria Zone 3, 1 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0ET
- Steven Murdoch 020 7215 0395
steven.murdoch@bis.gsi.gov.uk



Conflict Minerals - International Response

Positive Signs

- Intel: 'conflict mineral free'
- Fairphone:  sold 37,000 conflict mineral free phones
- Motorola
- Media Awareness