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Project Highlights

International Justice/ICC: Oct '08

Radio stations in South Kivu, eastern DRC, eager to rebroadcast the first programme in IWPR series on war crimes justice.

By IWPR Staff (24-Nov-08)

IWPR staff travelled to Bunia in the eastern Democratic Republic of Congo to launch a new radio programme aimed at increasing public awareness about war crimes trials at the International Criminal Court, ICC, in The Hague.

The fortnightly programme, Facing Justice, was broadcast for the first time in October around the Congo in Lingala, Swahili and French. IWPR's partner is Search for Common Ground, which distributes the programme via a network of more than 90 partner radio stations.

The Bunia launch was attended by more than 20 community leaders, including representatives from Ituri's main political parties, justice NGOs, lawyers, journalists and military and civilian court officials.

Facing Justice producer Stephanie Wolters and Richard Pituwa, managing editor at the radio station Canal Revelation in Bunia, explained that the programme will draw on contributions from IWPR-trained journalists in DRC, staff at IWPR Netherlands, legal experts, civil society, political analysts, human rights activists and government representatives.

Canal Revelation, Bunia's most popular radio station, will broadcast Facing Justice in Ituri along with two others, Radio Candipe and RTK Bunia. All promised to give feedback and monitor listener response.

The show was conceived after the IWPR Netherlands project team met local journalists and editors in DRC last year. They confirmed that independent and balanced reporting on sensitive issues such as war crimes is currently lacking and that radio was an effective means of disseminating such reports.

Though DRC has five nationals indicted by the ICC, recent surveys suggest most Congolese know little about the court. The vast majority believe it is important to hold those who committed war crimes accountable and that this will be necessary to secure peace in the country. Congolese people including the victims of war crimes would like to participate in ICC-related activities but few know how to access information on the court.

Bunia, the capital of the Ituri region, was chosen for the launch as it features heavily in the ICC indictments. Militia leaders Thomas Lubanga, Germain Katanga, Mathieu Ngudjolo and Bosco Ntaganda are all from the area and are accused by the ICC of committing war crimes there.

Early responses to Facing Justice has been excellent.



Richard Pituwa announces the launch of Facing Justice.
Photo by Lisa Clifford.

In South Kivu province, stations surveyed by Search for Common Ground said they received numerous requests to rebroadcast the first programme.

“Facing Justice is appreciated and listened to. Facing Justice will soon become a slogan for certain people,” said Radio Messenger du Peuple in Uvira.

Radio Deogratias, in Katanga, said Facing Justice is filling an important need, “The Congolese population is very preoccupied with justice in the Congo and international justice.”

RT Pweto in Pweto, also in Katanga, added, “Good programme. Good impression. Congratulations. There are too many requests for rebroadcast.”

Feedback Form

- ☐ After reading the article I am more informed on the subject matter
- ☐ The article influenced my view on the ICC and/or international justice
- ☐ I intend to use what I learned (in my work)

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