

## Never Again Rwanda: Goings and Comings for March and April 2007

Questions or inquiries about any of the information related below, or if you would like further details and links, please contact Jed Oppenheim at

[jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or go to the website [www.neveragainrwanda.org](http://www.neveragainrwanda.org)

Thank you.

### ACTIVITIES

➤ **3 March: 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Never Again Rwanda Kigali City Debating Competition Proudly sponsored by THE OPEN SOCIETY INSTITUTE**

The 3<sup>rd</sup> of March 2007 brought sunny skies and inspired minds to the Palace Hotel for the first official Never Again Rwanda Debate Competition. In its ongoing effort to promote critical thinking, connectivity and peace building amongst Rwandan youth and youth in other countries, Never Again Rwanda organized, facilitated and delivered, with the financial sponsorship of the Open Society Institute (OSI) and iDebate (both American based organizations), a brilliant day of intriguing conversations, dialogue and, of course, debate...

For more information about this event please contact Jed Oppenheim at

[jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or go to:

[http://www.neveragainrwanda.org/reports/nar\\_debate.pdf](http://www.neveragainrwanda.org/reports/nar_debate.pdf)

➤ **4 March: The Never Again Rwanda Youth Club at Kigali International Academy staged a magnificent performance for their school peers and members of Never Again Rwanda's central organizing group. The group performed a drama about youth responsibility to be involved in the *gacaca* (traditional justice) process in Rwanda since the genocide. In between each segment different members of the group performed dance, song, poetry or comedy. Their leader introduced the group and NAR's Youth Club Outreach Coordinator spoke a few words about the aims and objectives of NAR to the whole school.**

For more information about this event or about Youth Club activities please

contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or go to:

[www.neveragainrwanda.org](http://www.neveragainrwanda.org)

➤ **15-16 March: KURET Regional Child Labour Policy Conference**

At the invitation of the Ministry of Public Service, Skills Development, Vocational Training and Labour a member of NAR was able to attend this very important child labour policy conference regarding mainstreaming the alleviation of child labour legislation into country policy frameworks. KURET (Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Ethiopia Together) is a regional anti-worst forms of child labour advocacy and action body funded by World Vision, The Academy of Educational Development and the International Rescue Committee. The

conference brought together major policy stakeholders from each of the four beneficiary countries for this two-day conference. There were small group action planning by countries and larger discussions on best practices and Monitoring & Evaluation components to ensure the alleviation of the worst forms of child labour in each of these countries.

For more information about this event please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) and to learn more about KURET, please go to: [www.aed.org/Projects/KURET\\_Initiative.cfm](http://www.aed.org/Projects/KURET_Initiative.cfm)

- *25 March* → The Peacebuilding Centre welcomed its first international researcher, Sanne Bijlsma from Holland. Ms. Bijlsma is conducting research on history education—or the lack thereof—in Rwanda’s post-genocide context. Her research is being funded in part by her university in the Netherlands, but also by Unesco and the International Rescue Committee. She will be in Rwandan until 31 May 2007.

For more information about having NAR host your research, please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or go to: <http://www.neveragainrwanda.org/research/index.htm>. For more information about Ms. Bijlsma research, please contact her directly at [sannebijlsma@hotmail.com](mailto:sannebijlsma@hotmail.com)

- *4 April: Non-Violence and Martin Luther King Jr: A Solution to the Genocide in Darfur?*

NAR Education Programme Coordinator was invited to lead a discussion to heads of student groups at the National University of Rwanda (NUR), Butare on the 39<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Martin Luther King’s assassination. The question being addressed regarded the possibility of non-violent, peaceful actions that could be taken to end the horrific genocide in Darfur. By using the examples of King and Gandhi, the group of leaders worked on solutions and actions that could be taken in Darfur and outside of Darfur in order to end the atrocities.

The discussion was quite lively, as the Rwandans—many of whom were genocide survivors themselves—saw the imminent importance of ending the genocide now and the repercussions the world and Darfur will face with continued inaction by all the major stakeholders (especially the international community). One idea that came from the discussion was for the students at NUR to stage a large march/rally through Butare, inviting national and international media and other major organizations and stakeholders, and make it very visible that this was an anti-genocide protest being conducted by those that had lived through genocide. This plan is currently in the works.

For more information on the talk, the action or NAR’s response to the situation in Darfur, please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or go to [www.rebelletters.org](http://www.rebelletters.org) to find out how you can get involved.

➤ **14 April: RWANDAN YOUTH COMMEMORATING THE 13<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE GENOCIDE: A Collaboration for Rwanda's Future; Umubano wabanyarwanda ejo hazaza**

The event that happened on 14<sup>th</sup> April 2007 at Nsanga was a very important collaboration of youth from different backgrounds—from Rwanda and other Great Lakes countries—and from very different socio-economic classes: there were refugee Congolese youth from Gihembe Refugee Camp in Byumba, orphans of the Rwanda genocide from Association of the Orphans of Nsanga (AON), and NAR youth from different levels of social mobility.

The event was meant to bring together all these groups of youth for discussion and cultural performance meant to show the importance that youth play in making a better Rwanda and world. Each group of youth shared their views on Rwanda in the past, Rwanda today, and Rwanda in the future. This was done through drama, song and poems presented by the youth...

For more a full report of this very important event, please inquire from Jed Oppenheim. For further questions about Nsanga the event please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org). For a published article about the event, please go to:

[http://www.newtimes.co.rw/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=1231&Itemid=1](http://www.newtimes.co.rw/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=1231&Itemid=1). For more information about Nsanga, go to:  
<http://www.myspace.com/nsangarwanda>

- **17-26 April:** For 9 days NAR hosted/partnered with the Swedish Red Cross to host a group of 26 Swedish youth (mostly secondary students). NAR coordinated and implemented activities for the Swedish group included: A visit to Gisozi Memorial Site and debrief discussion with genocide survivors, a one-day workshop on “Human Rights Violations and What to do about them in Sweden, Rwanda and the World,” a two-day visit to Kibuye at Lake Kivu, a visit to and cultural performance by the NAR Kicukiro Youth Club, a discussion about secondary school life with NAR Kigali International Academy Youth Club members, a visit to Nsanga *umudugudu* to see what life is like for orphan-headed households in Rwanda and a visit to AVEGA Association of Genocide Widows.

Throughout the 9 days there was extensive collaboration and bonding amongst the Swedish and Rwandan youth. Connections were made that will continue long beyond the 9-day visit.

For more information about the visit, please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or Frida Sjostrand, of the Swedish Red Cross at [fridasjostrand@gmail.com](mailto:fridasjostrand@gmail.com)

- **18-28 April:** The NAR Peacebuilding Centre hosted the world-renowned Darfurian activist and exile, Adeb Yousif. Mr. Yousif recently completed a

human rights fellowship at the International Centre for Tolerance Education in New York City—the same fellowship that NAR Director of Peacebuilding Albert Nzamukwereka had done in 2006—and is not allowed to return to Darfur where the genocidal conflict is happening. Mr. Yousif is the founder and director of SUDO Sudan (the Sudan Social Development Organization). SUDO was founded before the genocide began, but is now the largest national human rights and humanitarian organization in Sudan. SUDO provides services to refugees from Chad, internally displaced persons in Darfur and others that need social services in Darfur.

Mr. Yousif and SUDO are embedded in the peace movement focusing on bringing the rebel leaders of Darfur together to have a single voice against the Sudanese government in Khartoum. Mr. Yousif has spent the last 2 months traveling East Africa enlisting African NGOs to be more active in the movement to end the genocide in Darfur, but also to end all violence and hatred in Africa. In Rwanda, Mr. Yousif has met with human rights organizations, government ministries and other interested members of civil society (Rwanda has the largest African Union peacekeeping force in Darfur). As well he is attempting to learn about the Rwandan genocide in order to come up with short-term and long-term development solutions in Darfur and elsewhere in Africa.

For more information about SUDO please go to: [www.sudosudan.org](http://www.sudosudan.org) or contact Mr. Yousif at [adeeb@sudosudan.org](mailto:adeeb@sudosudan.org). For more information about what NAR is doing about Darfur or about Mr. Yousif's stay in Rwanda, please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org). To find out more about Mr. Yousif's Rebel Letters campaign, please go to [www.rebelletters.org](http://www.rebelletters.org)

- *29 April:* A member of Never Again Rwanda, Jed Oppenheim (acting as an individual and *not* representing NAR), was invited to Kampala, Uganda and talk with the leaders of one of the rebel factions in Darfur—the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army (SLA/M). Some of these leaders are in exile in Kamapala, where Jed met with them to talk about re-unifying the rebel groups in Darfur and creating a united voice that the world can stand by. Jed also hammered down the point that civil society, women's organizations, organization for the most vulnerable orphans, children and youth, the Internally Displaced Persons and the refugees all need to be a part of the process in order to be legitimate in the eyes of the world. Jed also discussed the need for the end of human rights violations by all parties; there is a possibility that members of Never Again may conduct a training on human rights both for the SLA/M field commanders and for the vulnerable communities in Darfur.

For more information on this meeting, please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or Adeeb Yousif at [Adeeb@sudosudan.org](mailto:Adeeb@sudosudan.org).

ONGOING

- Ongoing Outreach→ NAR is focused on making connections with other organizations and groups doing similar work to our own. In the past couple of months we have met with GPUTV, a group of recently graduated Rwandan secondary school-goers, about the possibilities of making links with/for them as they wish to focus on volunteerism and community service in vulnerable Rwandan communities.

As well, NAR members began visiting the Gihembe refugee camp in Byumba that is home to over 10,000 Congolese refugees. Many of these 10,000 are youth. They are sorely lacking activities and clubs to keep them motivated and hopeful to get out of the camp and return to the Congo at some point in the future. NAR began doing theatre/drama with youth there and is considering starting a very unique NAR Youth Club there in the near future.

For more information please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org)

- Theatre/drama outreach→ With the arrival of Nandita Danesh and her partnership with NAR member Amina, NAR has picked up its efforts to enhance its use of theatre/drama to promote positive messages and raise awareness about pertinent youth-oriented/influenced issues here in Rwanda. Nandita is doing research on theatre in post-conflict societies and has been conducting small workshops with existing NAR Youth Clubs and other groups of youth throughout Rwanda with the avid assistance of Amina.

Theatre/drama is commonly used by NAR Youth Clubs and other organizations both for education and entertainment. It is cheap and does not need many resources, which makes it a powerful and useful way to promote peacebuilding and human rights ideas amongst the youth and their communities.

For more information about NAR theatre/drama projects and ideas, please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org), Nandita at [nanditadinesh@gmail.com](mailto:nanditadinesh@gmail.com), or Amina at [amina4jc@yahoo.com](mailto:amina4jc@yahoo.com)

- Youth Club outreach and creation has picked up in the last two months. At least 3 new clubs have been created: Mukamira Secondary School, near Gisenyi in the Northern Province, was introduced as were two new university level clubs at Kigali Institute of Management (KIM) and Kigali Independent University (ULK).

For more information about this or about Youth Club activities please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or go to: [www.neveragainrwanda.org](http://www.neveragainrwanda.org)

- “Generation Gran Lacs,” an interactive radio show on Contact FM, and co-sponsored by Radio La Benevolencija HTF (A Belgian Non-Governmental Organization), meant to be the voice of youth in the Great Lakes Region. Once

monthly, NAR youth and facilitator come to the Peacebuilding Centre, and four other sites around Rwanda, to participate and discussion around the radio show and the weekly theme. The youth have also recently received personal radios so they may follow along with the programming on weeks when they do not meet.

For more information about Generation Gran Lacs or Radio La Benevolencija HTF, please contact Albert Nzamukwereka, Director of the Peacebuilding centre, at [albert.nzamukwereka@gmail.com](mailto:albert.nzamukwereka@gmail.com).

- Baseline Assessment of NAR Youth Clubs. A survey questionnaire has been created and translated into French, English and Kinyarwanda so as to gauge how youth club members, throughout Rwanda, feel about their activities and the impact of the activities on their school, communities, families and local authorities. Small sponsorship was found to conduct the assessment, which began on 27 February outside of Gisenyi at College Apperel de Bukinanyana—one of the first NAR Youth Clubs.

For more information about the baseline please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org)

### In the Works

- NAR is currently working on a proposal to the Open Society Institute (U.S.) Women's Network. The initiative seeks to empower women and girls in marginalized settings. NAR's proposed program revolves around using the radio to broadcast shows, dramas and discussion relevant to the human rights issues most relevant to women and girls in Rwandan society. Radio in Rwanda is a powerful medium that reaches over 90% of the population and is considered trustworthy. By using the radio to send these 'empowerment' messages, females *and* males will be 'empowered' to make Rwanda a more just, equal and anti-discriminatory country.

For more information about this proposal or to provide input please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or Albert Nzamukwereka at [albert.nzamukwereka@gmail.org](mailto:albert.nzamukwereka@gmail.org)

- NAR members are working with two visiting theatre/drama specialists to create a learning module/curriculum to enhance the use of theatre/drama within our youth clubs and in Rwandan society in general. There will be trainings provided for youth club leaders and substantial follow-up in the form of mentoring and steering committees.

For more information or to provide input please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org), Nandita Danesh at [nanditadinesh@gmail.com](mailto:nanditadinesh@gmail.com), or Amina at [amina4jc@yahoo.com](mailto:amina4jc@yahoo.com).

## Announcements

- For the 4<sup>th</sup> time NAR will be partnering with the American based Global Youth Connect—this time during June and July. Part of the partnership is a 4-day workshop on ‘Human Rights Education and Advocacy.’ If you are Rwandan and would like to apply for the workshop, please visit our website at: .

For more information about Global Youth Connect, please see their website at [www.globalyouthconnect.org](http://www.globalyouthconnect.org), or for more general information about the partnership (past, present, future), please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org).

- NAR’s 1<sup>st</sup> annual International Youth Peace Summit, originally planned for July of this year, has been postponed. It will now take place from 27 December 2007-9 January 2008. For application and information, please visit our website at: [http://www.neveragainrwanda.org/press/scripts/full-news.php?2006\\_12\\_16\\_12\\_44\\_00\\_72812d782145018c68943c1a55131de9](http://www.neveragainrwanda.org/press/scripts/full-news.php?2006_12_16_12_44_00_72812d782145018c68943c1a55131de9), or contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org).
- Congratulations! NAR has recently been approved of for a grant by the National Endowment of Democracy in America! The funding will be for NAR-run activities meant to increase youth participation in the upcoming elections and to increase general understanding of the electoral process in Rwanda.

For more information, please contact Albert Nzamukwereka at [albert.nzamukwereka@gmail.com](mailto:albert.nzamukwereka@gmail.com).

- Congratulations! NAR’s Executive Chairperson has now officially been re-dubbed a doctor! We introduce our Executive Director: Dr. Joseph Nkurunziza.
- Welcome! NAR has recently hired a full-time, voluntary Administrative Assistant: Julius Kwizera. Mr. Kwizera will be helping out with administrative, logistics, and coordinating and proposal-writing tasks. He will also be helping out with outreach to donors and beneficiaries.
- Welcome back! NAR’s two main leaders, Dr. Nkurunziza and Mr. Albert Nzamukwereka, both went on very important capacity building trips in March. Dr. Nkurunziza was the Rwandan representative to a 3-week human rights workshop and training in Nepal, where he facilitated and participated in many modules related to human rights—with a global perspective. While Mr. Nzamukwereka recently returned from South Africa where he participated in a one-week workshop and training sponsored by ‘Soul City’—a South African radio programme and organization promoting human rights through radio communication and broadcast.

## Much Needed Donations

If you feel like making a donation, or know someone who does (or simply has something useful that they may throw away), these items are at the top of NAR's list of needs:

- i. Digital Camera's → to better document our activities and events.
- ii. Multi-media equipment → film-editing equipment, DVD player, CD/Tape player.
- iii. Multi-media resources → books, films (DVDs), Journal/Magazine Subscriptions related to Rwanda, Africa, Human Rights, Conflict Prevention/Resolution/Management/Transformation/etc.
- iv. Printer compatible with PC laptops.
- v. USB Memory Sticks.
- vi. Fax machine.
- vii. Xerox/photocopy machine.
- viii. Grant Writing Technician → Can you write grants? Do you know someone that can? Do you want to come to Rwanda? Are you in Rwanda?
- ix. Money donations → to contribute to our core funding in order to keep the Peacebuilding Centre up and running, but also to sponsor capacity building endeavours like our theatre training and leadership workshops.

**THANK YOU and HAVE A PLEASANT DAY,**

**NEVER AGAIN RWANDA**

Questions or inquiries about any of the information above, or if you would like further details, links and how to contribute please contact Jed Oppenheim at [jed@neveragaininternational.org](mailto:jed@neveragaininternational.org) or go to the website [www.neveragainrwanda.org](http://www.neveragainrwanda.org)  
Thank you.