

26 December 2008

To the Editor, The New York Times:

We are genocide scholars gravely concerned about signs of genocide and political murder in Zimbabwe. President Robert Mugabe, through discrimination and terror, has created an economic catastrophe. State-created hyper-inflation has caused famine, though not for Mugabe's partisans. Now cholera is sweeping a country that lacks medicines.

Mugabe's troops committed genocide in 1983 in Matabeleland. Mugabe is now committing genocide by attrition, which falls under Article 2(c) of the UN Genocide Convention: "Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction, in whole or in part." Mugabe's apparent intention is to destroy his political and ethnic enemies in Zimbabwe.

In 2005, Mugabe called slum dwellers "garbage." An estimated 700,000 were forcibly removed in Operation Murambatsvina ("Clean Out the Garbage").

Now children searching through garbage for food catch cholera. Merely drinking tap water can be deadly. The UN Children's Fund estimates that there are 24,000 cases of cholera in Zimbabwe, with over 1100 deaths so far.

The United Nations Security Council should refer Robert Mugabe to the International Criminal Court for crimes against humanity, and recognize the winners of the last free election in Zimbabwe in March 2008 as the legitimate representatives of Zimbabwe's people.

Can anyone trust a President who claims that "Zimbabwe is mine"?

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