

Yes monitors are crucial, but the Centre certainly with regards to a human rights monitoring mission must learn to walk before they attempt to run. They at a minimum should:

1. involve other UN field staff
2. have smaller teams
3. plan now for the 'next' mission
4. say no

The very severity of the human rights violation of genocide resulted in peacekeeping forces monitoring and reporting on such abuses after April 6<sup>11</sup>. However, this was done to satisfy operational imperatives and to quantify the threats to international peace and security which would justify either a Chapter VI or VII action. There was no feeling that they had a human rights monitoring role and certainly no understanding that they should be feeding such information into UN human rights channels like the Centre or rapporteurs. Obviously there needs to be a conscious attitude by peacekeepers that they are not to be 'silent witnesses'<sup>12</sup> to human rights violations.

At a minimum, where there is no UN human rights monitoring presence, peacekeepers must assume a duty to report incidents and allegations to the relevant UN human rights bodies and agencies. In talking to a variety of peacekeepers from past missions, they obviously did not feel that they did or should have had such a role, an attitude that screams out for rectification. In addition, this duty accrues to any and all UN personnel inasmuch as human rights are central to the very existence of the UN. Arguably even the presence of human rights monitors in a theatre of operations does not absolve peacekeepers or others from this duty.

There is also the added argument that the creation of even large human rights monitoring missions cannot achieve even a fraction of the coverage achieved by the peacekeeping, developmental, humanitarian, and other members of missions in complex emergencies where there are substantive threats to human rights. It is absolutely essential that every UN field staff be versed in the fundamentals of human rights observation and the procedures for reporting them. Their front line monitoring would serve to alert and trigger more indepth investigation or human rights promotion by UN human rights specialists.

This front line reporting into a central UN human rights clearing house requires some

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<sup>11</sup> Curiously, the force commander in responding to why apparent indicators of planned massacres and other human rights violations were not received in sufficient number or strength to alert them to some impending human rights catastrophe, stated that "the UN does not have an intelligence gathering network" and "it was not within our philosophy and not within our mandate", CBC TV Newsmagazine, 10:25 PM Nov.28 and 29th. It is also interesting to note that the French in Operation Turquoise saw human rights monitoring and the reporting of incidents to the UN as part of their mandate.

<sup>12</sup> The UN Secretary General in January 1993 instructed UN peacekeepers in the Western Sahara to interpret their mandate of monitoring the ceasefire to include the duty to report on human rights abuses, see UN doc S/25170 26 January 1993.