



NATIONAL NEWS

ICTR indicts. 70 suspects

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THE International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) has today indicted over 70 suspects, with more than 60 already arrested and transferred to the Tribunal's custody, the ICTR Chief of Press and Public Affairs, Tom Kennedy, yesterday briefed university law students attending East African Moot Court Competition on International Humanitarian Law (IHL).

He also said that the trials of nine have been completed, resulting in eight convictions and one acquittal.

He said nine trials were currently in progress involving 22 defendants. As a result, the total of completed cases and those still on trial involve nearly half of the total number of persons arrested.

He told the students who were accompanied by four lecturers and members of the Jury from International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) that the suspects convicted by ICTR include Jean Kambanda, ex-Prime Minister of the Rwandan Government during the genocide in 1994.

Kambanda was the first head of the government to be indicted and subsequently convicted of genocide. His conviction made it clear that international criminal law applied to the highest authorities and helped to create the conditions in which prosecutions could be undertaken against former Heads of State, like General Augustino Pinochet of Chile, former President Hussein Habre of Chad and Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia.

A further eleven Ministers of the 1994 interim government of Rwanda are also in the Tribunal's custody as well as senior military commanders, high ranking central and regional government officials, prominent businessmen, church leaders, journalists, intellectuals and other influential figures.

In order to hold the accused persons on remand pending their trials, the Tribunal has built a specially designed detention facility within the compound of the Tanzanian prison here in Arusha.

It is a high security facility, which is built according to international standards and is the first ever to have been built and managed by the United Nations.

The participants of the IHL Moot Court competition also visited one of the trial chambers of ICTR where there were proceedings of the joint trial of Colonel Theoneste Bagasora, Lieutenant-Colonel Anatole Nsengiyumva, Major Aloys Ntabakuze and Brigadier-General Gratien Kabiligi in what is called the "military group".

The Moot Court participants, who assembled at the Danish MS-Training Centre, Usa River, from Monday, are from nine universities drawn from Kenya, Tanzania, Uganda, Ethiopia and South Africa.

The universities are Nairobi University (Faculty of Law and Institute of Diplomacy), Moi University, Egerton University, Makerere University, Addis Ababa University, Western Cape University, United States International University (USIU) and University of Dar es Salaam.

The Lecturers and Members of the Jury for the Moot Court of which the finals are to be held on Saturday in one of ICTR courtrooms include Antoine Bouvier (from Geneva), Leonard Blazeby (Pretoria), Otmar Hofmann (Nairobi) and the Chief Coordinator of the event, Vincent Bernard from ICRC Regional Delegation Office, Nairobi.