



## BOOK REVIEWS

**Tim Allen, *Trial Justice: The International Criminal Court and the Lord's Resistance Army* (Zed Books, 2006)**

*Jessica Beess und Chrostin\**

The July 14, 2008 indictment of the Sudanese President, Omar al-Bashir, by the International Criminal Court (ICC) was preceded by intense debate about whether the move would harm the international effort to broker peace in Darfur and in the country as a whole. Proponents argued that there could be no peace without justice and that the ICC had an unequivocal duty to prosecute heinous war crimes at all times and at all levels. Opponents, on the other hand, feared the impact on ongoing peace efforts and asked what incentives remain for rogue leaders to make peace when their only reward will be prosecution. In this context, Tim Allen's *Trial Justice: The International Criminal Court and the Lord's Resistance Army* provides valuable insight into how ICC activities can impact, or possibly be manipulated by, political leaders. Allen, a reader in development studies at the London School of Economics, analyzes the situation in Uganda in 2005 and focuses in particular on ICC intervention and local opinions thereof. His work provides a provocative and insightful analysis of the relationship between peace, justice, and reconciliation that is essential to our current understanding of the Court's evolving role.

In the preface, Allen provides the reader with valuable insight into his personal relation to the borderlands of Uganda and his research methods. Allen spent four years in southern Sudan and two years in northern Uganda in the 1980s, initially as a teacher in rural secondary schools and at Juba University, and later as a field researcher among the Acholi and Madi. Although Allen states that previous field research provides a basis for much of his recent work, most of the research for this publication was conducted 20 years later, in November 2004 and March 2005, in numerous locations, including Gulu, Kitgum, Lira, Adjumani and Pader municipalities, and displacement camps at Awee, Opit, Awere, Lalogi, Anaka, Labuje, Pader, Pagimo, Corner Ogur, Abia, Agweng, Atiak, and Pabbo. Allen and his research assistants conducted around four hundred interviews with individuals and groups, including district officials, aid agency staff, peace negotiators, LRA combatants, and over two hundred people living in the displacement camps. Though these interviews were obviously numerous, Allen abstains from providing any gender and/or geographic breakdown of interviewees and cites names only in the context of direct quotations. Interviews were conducted in English, Lwo (an Acholi and Langi language which Allen can write and speak on a basic level), and Maditi (the Madi language). Clearly, his research methods appear to be thorough and provide the reader with insight into the regional opinions and context of the situation.

Allen begins his account with a brief history of the subject matter. The first chapter is dedicated to the establishment of the ICC and the second summarizes the development of the situation in Uganda through mid-2005. Allen's summary is particularly engaging and he succeeds in establishing himself as an objective narrator by taking into account numerous points of view expressed by individuals on both sides of the conflict—a rather difficult task

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\* BA Candidate, Political Science, Columbia University.