

GENOCIDE

Never Again

THE words "Never Again" were meant to be a solemn vow, a promise etched in the global conscience after the horrors of the Second World War. Yet, a recent UN report on the situation in Gaza, which called on the Israeli government to end acts of genocide, confirms what many fear: the promise has been shattered, not once, but repeatedly. Never again the world said. Yet, similar atrocities were committed in Bosnia, Rwanda, Cambodia, Myanmar, Syria and, more recently, Gaza.

The dictionary meaning of genocide is the killing of people such as an ethnic or religious group. This is what was actually taking place in Gaza and this is what took place during the Second World War to exterminate the Jews. It was also the case in Rwanda when there was a mass murder of the Tutsis in 1994.

For nations like Mauritius, which acceded to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide in 2019, the legal commitment is clear. The treaty's text is comprehensive, extending the

definition of genocide beyond direct killing to include acts like inflicting serious harm and preventing births aimed at destroying a group. But the legal language can feel distant and complex when confronted with the raw reality of suffering. The meaning of the word "destruction", the degree of the atrocity committed and the number of persons involved give rise to various interpretations. Similarly, the convention opens the door to accusations of genocide against governments if their officials inflict serious bodily harm or mental harm on members of ethnic minorities.

As we celebrate the African Human Rights Day to mark the adoption of the African charter on human rights, we should remind ourselves of the Rwanda genocide. It happened in April 1994 and is considered to be among the fastest mass killing in history; the mass murder of about 500,000 Tutsis in one hundred days. It was a tribal conflict where neighbours hacked neighbours to death under the very nose of the United Nations



by Satyajit BOELLE SC

peacekeeping forces in Rwanda. The world stood by and watched, as we have witnessed recently with Gaza.

Today, the nightmare continues in other parts of the world, and to the global powers it has become fertile ground for a geopolitical game as resolutions after resolutions for peace are vetoed in the Security Council. These political games turn human suffering into a bargaining chip, continuing a cycle of impunity and tragedy. The continued nightmare in various parts of the world suggests that for many, "Never Again" has become an empty phrase, its meaning hollowed out by repeated failures to act.



POINT OF VIEW

When Euphemisms Kill

WE hesitated to dampen the sense of relief that swept through Palestine at the announcement of the war's end. After years of unrelenting devastation, people returned to what remains of their homes; to streets they can no longer recognise; to the haunting silence of absence; to decomposed bodies lying beneath the rubble of what were once homes; to the agonising memories of dear ones who once dreamed, built and loved.

The images that emerged from Gaza were not scenes of victory; they were the ruins of endurance. Families sifted through the dust, seeking any trace of the world they knew. Children who survived played beside the remnants of schools, their laughter mingling with the cries of those searching for missing relatives. Hospitals operated amid wreckage and the air was heavy with the smell of dust, smoke and loss.

Survival for Palestinians is their way of resisting. It is the stubborn belief that a people so often written off can still rise. Built into that belief is a defiant hope that insists on seeing humanity where others see rubble; that listens for laughter amid ruins; that believes dignity can be reclaimed even after everything has been taken. Hope that stands among the ruins and still chooses to rebuild. It is the quiet, rebellious hope of those who refuse to be erased; who plant olive trees where craters once were and teach their children words of peace though they were born into war.

Such hope is both an act of remembrance and of resistance, and a promise that the story of Palestine will not end in silence but in renewal.

We would like to share in that hope, particularly in a world growing accustomed to despair. However, the recent bombardments of Palestinians and their land have shattered whatever illusion of calm the 'end of war' had offered. There remains no roadmap for peace and no binding commitment from the powers that fuelled and tolerated this destruction. The so-called cessation of hostilities was merely a pause in a cycle of violence – a fragile interval now broken once more by airstrikes, mourning and unburied dead.

The semblance of peace promised to Palestinians has proven to be an illusion, more like a convenient fiction meant to placate public opinion while despair deepens on the ground.

Peace cannot be declared; it must be built. And it begins with the courage to call war crimes by their name, not to cloak them in the language of diplomacy. Words are not harmless; they shape what we see, feel and, ultimately, allow. When the bombing of homes becomes a 'security measure', the slaughter of children is called 'collateral damage' and the erasure of a people is described as 'self-defence' instead of genocide, language itself becomes a weapon that cleanses conscience and conceals crime.

To soften the language is to soften the crime. Euphemisms numb the world into indifference. They allow horror to continue. They kill twice: first the body, then the truth. And without truth, there can be no justice; without justice, no peace.

Peace begins with the refusal to lie. It begins with witnesses who will not look away, with voices that will not be silenced by diplomacy or decorum. Only through truth can justice take root, and only through justice can peace endure. The soil of Palestine, soaked in both unimaginable grief and indomitable courage, may one day blossom again but only if we dare to speak plainly of the horror buried beneath it.

The world cannot remain silent. It must acknowledge the truth, demand accountability and support the rebuilding of lives and communities. It must ensure that Palestinians are granted their full rights, dignity and sovereignty and that those responsible for war crimes are held to account. Only then can hope itself transform from the hope of survival into the hope of lasting peace.



by Touria PRAYAG

Moazzam Begg, former Guantanamo prison detainee, briefs NHRC on conditions prevailing in US special security prison



by Jean Marie RICHARD

ON the 31st of January 2002, he was abducted in Pakistan to be detained for one year in Bagram Prison before being transferred to Guantanamo, the special security prison amidst a US base on the island of Cuba. He shared with us his experience, stating that his kidnapping had been organised by the CIA, assisted by Pakistani Special Forces. In Bagram, he de visu witnessed the beating up to death of two inmates by US military.

Thereafter, transferred to Guantanamo, where the humiliations and ill-treatment persisted for two years, enduring physical and verbal abuse intimidation and solitary confinement in windowless cells, with no contact with the family, no formal charge and no access to lawyers. Being a British citizen, he was finally released with no case to answer after two years. This experience of Guantanamo spurred his desire to engage in worldwide advocacy in favour of political detainees such as Dr Aafia Siddiqui and Abu Zubaydah, who is believed to have been among them. He has been held in Guantanamo without charge for 22 years.

He since travels the world to hold conferences, participate in documentaries and forums denouncing the violation of fundamental rights of people incarcerated and tortured by the same states which present themselves as beacons of democracy, freedom of opinion and champions of human

CAGE International's Senior Director, Moazzam Begg, paid a courtesy call to the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) headquarters, Ebene Heights, Cyber City Ebene, on his very first day of an informative tour in Mauritius hosted by FLAG NGO. Begg, who was involved in humanitarian work, namely the creation of schools for boys and girls in Afghanistan and also the creation of fresh water wells, had to seek refuge in Pakistan following a bounty of USD 5,000 promised by special services in relation to foreigners working in the country following the take over by Taliban.



MOAZZAM BEGG

rights. Moazzam Begg affirms: "The respective US administrations have, with Guantanamo, generated so many own goals that they have become a moral and political disaster wherein people have been imprisoned for the last 23 years without being formally charged or presented to a court of justice."

During his conversation with the NHRC and investigators, Begg further addressed events on the Gaza genocide and Israel's apartheid occupation of Palestine. He also evoked the UK's recent conditional transfer of sovereignty of the Chagos Archipelago back to Mauritius. Mauritius was forced to 'sell' the islands to Britain in exchange for independence in 1968. The May 2025 transfer, however, excludes the strategically positioned island of Diego Garcia, which houses a US military base that was a central node in the CIA's top-secret rendition and torture programme. The UK will now 'lease' the island for another 99 years, with the base remaining in place.

The CAGE International Senior Director said: "One recurrent question was the role of the British and US governments in the use of Diego Garcia in the CIA torture programme during the War on Terror. Former British Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw, infamously,

once stated that believing the island was used for US rendition flights was a 'wild conspiracy theory'." That was until CIA Director, Mark Hayden, confirmed the use of the island for rendition stopover flights. Lawrence Wilkerson, chief of staff to the former US Secretary of State Colin Powell, confirmed prisoners were held and interrogated there. Palestinian detainee Abu Zubaydah is believed to have been among them. He's been held without charge for 22 years in Guantanamo. During his tour of the island, Moazzam Begg held conferences on the plight of Palestinians together with the necessity to close Guantanamo.

ABOUT CAGE INTERNATIONAL

CAGE International has evolved alongside the changing nature of the war on terror. Established in 2003 as Cage-Prisoners, it became one of the most reliable sources of information on the status and whereabouts of prisoners seized under the war on terror, for their families, lawyers, as well as press and academics.

In 2013, Cage-Prisoners became CAGE International in response to a broader remit of confronting other rule of law abuses taking place under the UK counter-terrorism strategy. CAGE International was the first to reveal the core injustices of the UK's counter-extremism strategy, Prevent, and it continuously confronted broader harmful narratives, laws and policies of the war on terror through reportage, media engagement and legal action.

Twenty years on, its unique approach, combining community-based support and advice with a keen eye on current law, policy developments and knowledge of their on-the-ground impact, means that their campaigns and actions are strong, authentic and often successful. Now, they offer advice and support in diverse civil society responses to the harmful war on terror laws and policies around the world.

TENDER NOTICE
OPEN NATIONAL BIDDING

AML
AIRPORTS OF MAURITIUS CO. LTD
A member of AHL GROUP

INVITATION FOR PROPOSALS
Road Repairs and Overlay from MK Cargo to SCP2 at SSRIA
REF NO: RFQ/WK/TSDB/VB/SG/25/005

Airports of Mauritius Co. Ltd (AML), a member of AHL Group, invites proposals from eligible bidders for Road Repairs and Overlay from MK Cargo to SCP2 at SSRIA.

Interested bidders may obtain further information and download the complete set of bidding documents, free of charge from the AML website URL <https://aml.mru.aero/index.php/business/procurement/tender-notices>. Prospective bidders should regularly visit this website to take cognizance of any addendum/clarification issued.

A site visit has been scheduled on **Monday 10 Nov 2025 at 10.00 hrs.** The venue shall be AML Corporate Office, SSR International Airport, Plaine Magnien. Bidders are kindly requested to confirm their presence to the Chairperson Tender Committee by e-mail at tendercommittee@aml.aero at least two days prior to the scheduled date.

Proposals (in sealed envelope clearly marked "**Road Repairs and Overlay from MK Cargo to SCP2 at SSRIA - RFQ/WK/TSDB/VB/SG/25/005 - (26 NOV 25)**") should be addressed to the Chairperson Tender Committee, Airports of Mauritius Co. Ltd, and deposited in the Tender Box located at AML Corporate Office, SSR International Airport, Plaine Magnien, **on or before Wednesday 26 NOV 2025 at latest by 13:00 hrs.**

Electronic and late bids shall not be accepted.

24 October 2025

AML Corporate Office, SSR International Airport, Plaine Magnien, MAURITIUS
Tel: (230) 603 6000 • Web: aml.mru.aero

African Human Rights Day

AFRICAN Human Rights Day, observed each year on 21 October, marks the adoption of the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights in 1981. This landmark instrument, often called the Banjul Charter, set out a uniquely African vision of human dignity, rooted in community, solidarity and justice.

The Charter affirmed that every individual has the right to life, equality and freedom from discrimination, while also recognising collective rights such as the right of peoples to self-determination and development. This dual focus distinguishes it from other regional human rights frameworks.

African Human Rights Day is therefore not only a commemoration but also a call to action. It reminds states of their obligation to protect citizens' rights, and to strengthen democratic institutions and the rule of law.

Above all, the day celebrates the resilience of African peoples in their ongoing quest for freedom, dignity and shared humanity across the continent.

In Mauritius, this year's commemoration of African Human Rights Day offers a moment for reflection and renewal. As a proud member of the African Union, Mauritius continues to uphold the principles of the African Charter by promoting democracy, equality and social justice. Yet, the occasion also invites deeper engagement with issues such as migrant workers' rights, equality and access to justice for all. Strengthening these rights will ensure that the spirit of the Banjul Charter remains alive not only in law, but in the daily lives of all Mauritians.

T. P.

CONTACTS UTILES

Pour toute information, accompagnement ou dépôt de plainte, voici les coordonnées essentielles de la NHRC
Adresse physique : 3^e étage, Ebene Heights, Ebene

• Secrétaire de la Commission
Tél. : 460-5148 Email : mhrcds@nhrcet.mu
Fax : 468-6206