

OPINION PAGE

Are Somalis Communicating with the International Community through a Wrong Phone Number?

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Around two thousand delegates from 111 states and large number of international and regional non-state actors are attending the current International Criminal Court (ICC) Review Conference in Kampala, Uganda. The incumbent and the former UN Secretary Generals, **Ban Ki-moon** and **Kofi Annan** are among the VIP guests participating the 11-days deliberations of the proposals that might result into a possible amendments of the ICC statue, including setting a clear operational definition to distinguish *freedom fighter* from *terrorist*, and the distinction between *just* and *unjust* conflicts.

I believe that none of the 2000 delegates ever heard or gave attention to the stories of the 500,000 innocent Somalis killed during the last three decades, including my minor brother, **Mohamoud Mohamed Diriye**, a.k.a. *Kamas*, who was slaughtered by the late Siyad Barre's government troops in his way to Ethiopian border with waves of influx of refugees.

According an eye witness, it was around 4:00pm in Mid June of 1988, when then-24 years old, unemployed, *Kamas*, and other refugees ate rice cooked only by water at near *Garabis* hill, which lies 20km, Southwest of Hargeisa.

A hunter jetfighter belong to the Somali National Air Force bombed the civilians who just got relief and rest from a long horrible trip from their homes. Although, the refugees took hideouts, they do not know that the worst has yet to come. Two machine-gun-mounted military vehicles (popularly known as *Baroon* in Somali) and sneaking heavily armed regiment belonging to the *Xooga Dalka Soomaaliyeed* (Somali National Army) appeared out of a thick bush of acacia trees; and started shouting the refugees indiscriminately.

When the government troops killed as much men as they want, including my brother, they took shaking, terrified, and mourning teen age girls and young women to rape in nearby.

When both the military jetfighters and the infantry left from the horrific scene, some of the survived refugees re-appeared from their hideouts to look after what and whereabouts of their relatives. "They (military) hit me by the *baroon*, and shout me by the machine gun, while I was hardly trying to stand and escape", my brother told to two cousins of ours, who found him in a ditch of blood, in his last words.

ICC who is currently handling war crimes and crimes against the humanity from various countries, including five from Africa, ignores the far cry of Somalis, but very busy to

investigate the accusations of alleged atrocities and war crimes in somewhere else of Africa, which allegedly committed by

1. Omar El-Bashir, Sudanese President
2. Jean Pierre Bemba, Ex-Vice President of Congo
3. Thomas Lubanga, former militia leader of Congo
4. Joseph Kony of Uganda's Lords Resistance Army, currently in Southern Sudan
5. Okoto Odhiambo of Uganda's Lords Resistance Army, currently in Central African Rep.
6. Dominic Ongwen of Uganda's Lords Resistance Army, currently in Congo, and
7. The post election violence in Kenya

If ICC continues to ignore the atrocities, war crimes, and the crimes against humanity committed in the Somali territories; I will not blame a Somali layman, if he node his head for the religious extremists, who claims that there is no international justice or democracy, but there are *Gaalo* (none-Muslim in Somali) who planned to exterminate the Muslims; or even agree the pirates' justification of that international fishing companies are illegally fishing at the Somali shores and dumping nuclear wastages.

Finally, Somalis should ask themselves, whether they are using wrong phone number to communicate with the international community or not.