

PROSECUTING HEADS OF STATE

Since 1990, at least sixty-seven former heads of state or government have been prosecuted for serious human rights or financial crimes. The majority of these leaders were brought to trial in free and fair judicial processes, and some served time in prison as a result. This book explores the reasons for the meteoric rise in trials of senior leaders and the motivations, public dramas, and intrigues that accompanied efforts to bring them to justice. Drawing on an analysis of the sixty-seven cases, the book examines the emergence of regional trends in Europe and Latin America and contains eight case studies of high-profile trials of former government leaders – Augusto Pinochet (Chile), Alberto Fujimori (Peru), Joseph "Erap" Ejercito Estrada (the Philippines), Frederick Chiluba (Zambia), Pasteur Bizimungu (Rwanda), Slobodan Milošević (former Yugoslavia), Charles Taylor (Liberia and Sierra Leone), and Saddam Hussein (Iraq) – studies written by experts who closely followed the trials and their societal impacts. This is the first published book to examine the global rise in the number of domestic and international trials, telling the tales in readable prose and with fascinating details.

Ellen L. Lutz is the executive director of Cultural Survival, an international human rights organization that works on behalf of indigenous peoples. She previously directed the Center for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution and taught international human rights law, international criminal law, and other international law subjects at Tufts University's Fletcher School. From 1989 to 1994, she served as the California director for Human Rights Watch and as that organization's principal researcher on Mexico. She has written widely on human rights and conflict resolution, international and transnational accountability for human rights violations, indigenous rights, and human rights in Latin America. Lutz received her J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley (1985), and her M.A. in anthropology from Bryn Mawr College (1978).

Caitlin Reiger, a recognized expert on international prosecutions, is deputy director of the Prosecutions Program at the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). From 2003 to 2005, she was the chambers senior legal advisor to the judges of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. In 2001, she cofounded and served as legal research coordinator of the Judicial System Monitoring Program in East Timor and later appeared as defense counsel before East Timor's Special Panels for Serious Crimes. Reiger has provided extensive policy advice and comparative research on national-international tribunals for serious human rights violations. Reiger manages the ICTJ's Cambodia program and managed the ICTJ's former Yugoslavia program. She received a B.A. in history and an LL.B. from the University of Melbourne (1996) and an LL.M. (in international law/human rights) from the London School of Economics (2003).



Prosecuting Heads of State

Edited by
ELLEN L. LUTZ
CAITLIN REIGER







Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India

103 Penang Road, #05-06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9780521491099

© Cambridge University Press & Assessment 2009

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2009 Reprinted 2009

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data

Prosecuting heads of state / edited by Ellen L. Lutz, Caitlin Reiger.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-0-521-49109-9 (hardback)

1. Trials (Political crimes and offenses). 2. Heads of state – Legal status, laws, etc.

I. Lutz, Ellen L. 1955- II. Reiger, Caitlin, 1970-

к543.РбР76 2009

345'.0231 - dc22 2008038066

ISBN 978-0-521-49109-9 Hardback ISBN 978-0-521-75670-9 Paperback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.



Just as we have depended on each other and our colleagues for inspiration and analytic rigor, we have also depended on the support of our families who encouraged us and filled in for us so that this book could come to fruition. Caitlin particularly extends her thanks to Adrian Morrice for his ongoing support and for reminding her why she does this. She dedicates this book to her daughters Havana and Lia, whose lives to date have accompanied the entire process. Ellen's gratitude similarly goes to Theodore Macdonald, Jr. She dedicates this work to Martina Couto and to David and Julia Randall, who, for her, are the reason for everything.



Contents

List	of Contributors	page ix
Abo	ut the International Center for Transitional Justice	xiii
Fore	eword	XV
Preface		xix
1	Introduction Ellen L. Lutz and Caitlin Reiger	1
2	Prosecutions of Heads of State in Europe Ellen L. Lutz	25
3	Prosecutions of Heads of State in Latin America Naomi Roht-Arriaza	46
4	The Multiple Prosecutions of Augusto Pinochet Naomi Roht-Arriaza	77
5	A Leader Takes Flight: The Indictment of Alberto Fujimori Ronald Gamarra	95
6	Charm and Punishment: How the Philippines' Leading Man Became Its Most Famous Prisoner Abby Wood	111
7	Shifting Legitimacy: The Trials of Frederick Chiluba Paul Lewis	130

vii



viii	Contents	
8	A Justice "Trickle-Down": Rwanda's First Postgenocide President on Trial Lars Waldorf	151
9	Justice Squandered? The Trial of Slobodan Milošević Emir Suljagić	176
10	A Big Man in a Small Cell: Charles Taylor and the Special Court for Sierra Leone Abdul Tejan-Cole	205
11	Political Pedagogy, Baghdad Style: The Dujail Trial of Saddam Hussein Miranda Sissons and Marieke Wierda	233
12	Conclusion Ellen L. Lutz and Caitlin Reiger	275
APPI	ENDIX: List of Prosecutions of Heads of State or Government since 1990	295
Sele	cted Bibliography	305
Index		309



List of Contributors

EDITORS

Ellen L. Lutz is the executive director of Cultural Survival, an international human rights organization that works on behalf of indigenous peoples. She previously directed the Center for Human Rights and Conflict Resolution and taught international human rights law, international criminal law, and other international law subjects at Tufts University's Fletcher School. From 1989 to 1994, she served as the California director for Human Rights Watch and as that organization's principal researcher on Mexico. She has written widely on human rights and conflict resolution, international and transnational accountability for human rights violations, indigenous rights, and human rights in Latin America. Lutz received her J.D. from the University of California, Berkeley (1985), and her M.A. in Anthropology from Bryn Mawr College (1978).

Caitlin Reiger, a recognized expert on international prosecutions, is deputy director of the Prosecutions Program at the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). From 2003 to 2005, she was the chambers senior legal advisor to the judges of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. In 2001, she cofounded and served as legal research coordinator of the Judicial System Monitoring Program in East Timor and later appeared as defense counsel before East Timor's Special Panels for Serious Crimes. Reiger has provided extensive policy advice and comparative research on national-international tribunals for serious human rights violations. Reiger manages the ICTJ's Cambodia program and managed the ICTJ's former Yugoslavia program. She received a B.A. in history and an LL.B. from the University of Melbourne (1996) and an LL.M. (in international law/human rights) from the London School of Economics (2003).



X

Cambridge University Press & Assessment 978-0-521-49109-9 — Prosecuting Heads of State Edited by Ellen L. Lutz , Caitlin Reiger Frontmatter More Information

List of Contributors

CONTRIBUTORS

Ronald Gamarra is a Peruvian lawyer who specializes in legal defense of victims of human rights violations. Currently he serves as the executive secretary of the Peruvian National Human Rights NGO Coordination Body and is one of the legal representatives of the victims in the trial against ex-President Alberto Fujimori for crimes against humanity. He was a member, and later director, of the Legal Section at the Institute for Legal Defense (1988–2000). He served as special ad hoc solicitor for cases of corruption and human rights violations committed by former President Alberto Fujimori, presidential advisor Vladimiro Montesinos, and individuals belonging to Fujimori's criminal organization (February 2001–December 2004). From 2005 to 2007, he returned to work at the Institute for Legal Defense. He is the author of various articles and books in his field and has a master's degree in criminal law.

Paul Lewis is a journalist for the *Guardian* newspaper. His work includes investigations on homegrown terrorism, human trafficking, and immigration. He was the Stern Fellow at the *Washington Post* in 2007, the Henry Fellow at Harvard University in 2004, and president of Cambridge University Students' Union in 2002. He has a First Class B.A. degree in Social and Political Science.

Naomi Roht-Arriaza is a professor of law at the University of California Hastings College of Law. She is the author of *The Pinochet Effect: Transitional Justice in the Age of Human Rights* (2005) and *Impunity and Human Rights Violations in International Law and Practice* (1995); is coeditor of *Transnational Justice in the Twenty-First Century: Beyond Truth versus Justice* (with Javier Mariezcurrena) (2006); and has written numerous articles and book chapters on justice and accountability. She has lived and worked extensively in Latin America and is a member of the Legal Advisory Council of the Center for Justice and Accountability.

Miranda Sissons is the deputy director for Middle East Programs at the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ). An Australian, she is a specialist in human rights and international humanitarian law (IHL) in the Middle East. Before joining the ICTJ, Sissons worked as a researcher and consultant at Human Rights Watch, helped develop Arab civil society networks on the International Criminal Court, and served in the Australian diplomatic service. She has authored numerous publications on human rights and IHL issues in the Middle East and elsewhere. Sissons holds a B.A. from Melbourne University and an M.A. in international relations from Yale University, where she was a Fulbright Scholar.



List of Contributors

Emir Suljagić is a Srebrenica survivor, journalist, and author born in 1975 in Ljubovija, Serbia. In 1995, the lives of nearly every man he had ever known – and those of many women too – were wiped out in the Srebrenica genocide. He published a book about the experience called *Postcards from the Grave*. After the war, he went to the University of Sarajevo to read political science. From September 1996 through January 2006, he worked as a reporter and staff writer at the Sarajevo-based weekly magazine *Dani*. Between 2002 and 2004, he worked in the Hague as a correspondent from the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia for *Dani*, and for the London-based Institute for War and Peace Reporting. He is currently a doctoral candidate at University of Hamburg.

Abdul Tejan-Cole is the chairman of the Anti-Corruption Commission of Sierra Leone. He has an LL.B. (Hons) degree from Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, and an LL.M. from University College London. He was a human rights teaching Fellow at Columbia University in New York and a Yale World Fellow. He worked as a trial attorney and appellate counsel in the Special Court for Sierra Leone and taught law at the University of Sierra Leone. Tejan-Cole also headed the Cape Town office of the International Center for Transitional Justice in 2006–2007. He has written extensively on human rights and transitional justice issues.

Lars Waldorf is the director of and a lecturer at the Centre for International Human Rights, Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London. He ran Human Rights Watch's field office in Rwanda from 2002–2004 and covered genocide trials at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in 2001. He currently is writing a book on *gacaca*, Rwanda's traditional, community-based approach to resolving disputes and allowing reconcilliatory justice, with generous support from the United States Institute of Peace. He received a B.A. (1985) from Harvard College and a J.D. (1989) from Harvard Law School. After clerking for the New Jersey Supreme Court (1991–1992), he worked at Bet Tzedek Legal Services in Los Angeles and the Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights as a Skadden Fellow (1992–1994). He was a senior trial attorney at the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice in Washington, D.C. (1994–1999). He has also taught at The New School and Harvard College.

Marieke Wierda is a Dutch citizen born and raised in the Republic of Yemen. She studied law at Edinburgh (LL.B.) and New York University (LL.M.) and is a member of the New York Bar. Wierda joined the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in its early years (1997–2000) and

хi



xii

List of Contributors

worked with the judges in chambers. Subsequently she joined the International Center for Transitional Justice (2001–present), where she is Director of Prosecutions. She has worked on prosecutions-related issues in a wide variety of contexts, including Sierra Leone, Uganda, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Lebanon. She has numerous publications including, with Richard May, a book titled *International Criminal Evidence* (2002).

Abby Wood is a graduate of Harvard Law School and The Fletcher School for Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. She is currently a doctoral student at the Travers Department of Political Science, University of California at Berkeley. Her research interests include comparative politics, institutional design, and democratic theory.



About the International Center for Transitional Justice

The International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ) assists countries pursuing accountability for past mass atrocity or human rights abuse. The center works in societies emerging from repressive rule or armed conflict, as well as in established democracies where historical injustices or systemic abuse remain unresolved.

To promote justice, peace, and reconciliation, government officials and nongovernmental advocates are likely to consider a variety of transitional justice approaches including both judicial and nonjudicial responses to human rights crimes. The ICTJ assists in the development of integrated, comprehensive, and localized approaches to transitional justice comprising five key elements: prosecuting perpetrators, documenting and acknowledging violations through nonjudicial means such as truth commissions, reforming abusive institutions, providing reparations to victims, and facilitating reconciliation processes.

The center is committed to building local capacity and generally strengthening the emerging field of transitional justice, and it works closely with organizations and experts around the world to do so. By working in the field through local languages, the ICTJ provides comparative information, legal and policy analysis, documentation, and strategic research to justice and truth-seeking institutions, nongovernmental organizations, governments, and others.

The ICTJ Prosecutions Program has worked for several years with domestic and international justice initiatives, drawing on staff with experience in such tribunals. It maintains as its goals the promotion and strengthening of domestic and international(ized) criminal prosecutions for systemic crimes, seeking to define further the concept of a "fair trial," and influencing policy makers by producing high-quality analysis of key developments in the field, including



xiv

About the ICTI

monitoring of significant trials such as those of Alberto Fujimori, Charles Taylor, and Hissène Habré. The program is also dedicated to analysis and advice on the impact of the International Criminal Court on the countries and regions where it is active and the strengthening of the capacity of local actors to engage in informed decision making on prosecution options and strategies.



Foreword

by Mary Robinson

One of the most important developments in the slow but determined journey of the international community toward a system of justice and accountability is the increasing acceptance of the duty to prosecute those responsible for mass human rights violations, regardless of rank or position. The historical unspoken presumption that heads of state may act with impunity has finally begun to crumble, but progress continues to be extremely difficult, unsteady, and hard fought.

The strong and conflicting reactions in Sudan and elsewhere to the request by the prosecutor of the International Criminal Court for the arrest of President Omar Hassan Ahmad al-Bashir of Sudan, and the response in Bosnia and Herzegovina to the arrest of Radovan Karadžić, show the political sensitivities that can become significant bumps in the road.

It is important that the lessons learned on this difficult journey are available to us all. However, until now there has been no detailed review of major attempts at bringing national leaders to justice.

Prosecuting Heads of State fills this void and is a fascinating and readable account of efforts to bring senior political leaders to justice for human rights and financial crimes. It considers the background and political circumstances that have enabled these cases to proceed and the effect they have had on transitions to peace and democracy in the countries concerned. The book analyzes the broader impact of these prosecutions within the affected communities in terms of satisfying victims' demands for justice, establishing an historical record of the crimes, and reestablishing a normative framework of respect for human rights and trust in state institutions. Prosecuting Heads of State illustrates the increasing institutionalization and respect for the rule of law throughout the world.

While serving as president of Ireland, I traveled to Rwanda soon after the genocide of 1994 in the hope of bringing attention to the tragedy that occurred



xvi Foreword

there and focusing on the collective responsibility of those who caused such appalling brutality. My concern for putting an end to impunity in the case of gross violations of human rights continued when I had the honor to serve as United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. With my colleagues, our work included striving to achieve accountability and assistance to victims of numerous atrocities throughout the world, and we often felt frustrated.

Visiting East Timor in late 1999, I heard firsthand accounts from victims of their suffering at the hands of the Indonesian military and militias and urged the Indonesian government to help bring senior leaders to account for the systematic violence they inflicted during this period. Other situations of mass human rights violations during my tenure included Chechnya, the Great Lakes region of Africa, Sierra Leone, the Balkans, and the Middle East. In each situation of conflict, the tragic reality is that those who are least powerful – very often women and children – routinely become innocent victims of those who abuse the power with which they have been entrusted.

The growing international consensus toward prosecuting heads of state that is evidenced by the creation of the UN-backed and hybrid tribunals, as well as indictments from regional and domestic courts, is encouraging. Before 1990, only a handful of ex-leaders throughout history had been prosecuted, and most of them in "political trials" without the benefit of due process or an independent judiciary. Since 1990, more than sixty former heads of state have been indicted in various jurisdictions. Most were accused of egregious human rights or financial crimes for which there was legitimate evidence and were tried in free and fair judicial processes. Many have served time in prison. Side by side with this transformation has been increasing state willingness to overturn or find loopholes in past amnesties, to waive official immunities, and to remove other impediments to trial.

All individuals, regardless of official rank or capacity, are legally bound to refrain from committing such horrific crimes as genocide, war crimes, and crimes against humanity. This principle is rooted in the ancient laws and customs of almost all cultures and throughout history. A strong global response announces to all those in positions of power and leadership that they can no longer use terror tactics, systematic rape, ethnic cleansing, mutilation, and indiscriminate killing of noncombatants as weapons of war or for any other purpose. The deterrent effect of prosecuting those in power cannot be underestimated. The marked increase of indictments since the fall of the Berlin Wall should send a strong message to those in power to conduct themselves within the framework of the norms of international law. Impunity for committing crimes while in office is no longer guaranteed, and the contemporary



Foreword xvii

movement toward prosecuting heads of state indicates that no one is above the law.

The cases described in this volume show that we still have some way to go, yet as a former head of state, I can attest to the fact that, symbolically at least, the successful examples detailed herein send a very powerful message indeed.



Preface

This book owes its origins to Ferdinand Marcos, former dictator of the Philippines and a tyrant who died with the blood of some ten thousand victims of torture, disappearance, and extrajudicial execution on his hands. In early 1986, just a few months after an Argentine court found five of that country's nine former dictators guilty of torture, disappearance, and extrajudicial execution, Marcos was deposed by a populist uprising and fled to Honolulu. Then an idealistic new lawyer with some human rights experience, I was determined that he would pay for his crimes, if not in the Philippines then in the United States. In law school, I had studied the landmark *Filártiga v. Peña-Irala* decision, in which a U.S. appellate court ruled that an alien can be sued for human rights abuses that violate "the law of nations" even if those acts took place in another country. If Marcos could not be criminally charged in the United States, his victims could at least enjoy a measure of justice by suing him here for damages.

One of America's great human rights lawyers, Paul Hoffman, a colleague who then was the legal director at the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California, offered to lead the litigation team and our twelve-year battle against Marcos in U.S. federal courts began. Our odyssey was so fraught with legal challenges that a good professor could base an entire year of law school instruction on that case alone. It was the political challenges that arose during the Honolulu-based trial that were most perturbing, however.

Although the creation of an international tribunal was unimaginable when we first filed our lawsuit, by the time the litigation wound down (technically it still hasn't ended; even though a jury awarded Marcos' victims a \$1.2 billion judgment, his assets have yet to be recovered), the international community was in active negotiations to establish an International Criminal Court (ICC) with jurisdiction to try future leaders who behaved as Marcos had done. As an observer at the 1998 Rome conference that established the ICC, I couldn't help pondering that the planned new court was bound to face the same problems



xx Preface

we had faced in the Marcos case. What was most amiss with that litigation was its location, far away from where the crimes had occurred or where the victims still lived. In contrast to the junta trial in Buenos Aires, where the counsel and judges were Argentine, the media had a stake in closely monitoring the proceedings, and the survivors and the loved ones of those who died could testify or be present in the courtroom, only a handful of the Marcos regime's ten thousand victims had any connection with the proceedings, and the media barely noticed the trial was taking place.

For me the most important lessons learned from the Marcos lawsuit were that whenever possible, justice for human rights crimes must be as accessible as possible to those who suffered most and that the best kind of justice leads to national acknowledgment of the wrongs that occurred and societal involvement in righting them. Those lessons prompted me to begin asking some of the questions that this book addresses: To what extent were sovereign states trying leaders who had committed serious human rights or other crimes while in power? What were their motivations? What were the outcomes of such cases? What was the impact on society of doing so or not doing so?

Queries of this magnitude cannot be fully explored in isolation, and I was fortunate to have many friends and colleagues who were wrestling with related questions and were eager to confer or collaborate. My deepest gratitude goes to Naomi Roht-Arriaza and Kathryn Sikkink, both dear friends and sometimes coauthors, who were as captivated by these issues as I was and always eager to reexamine them from a fresh perspective.

Despite several years of preliminary exploration, this book did not begin to take shape until 2004 when the U.S. Institute of Peace (USIP) awarded me a grant to write it. Then, just as the work was getting off the ground, the circumstances of my life changed, forcing me to face the fact that it would be impossible for me to write the book I had originally proposed. Fortunately, I also realized that there was a much better book to be written by collaborating with the International Center for Transitional Justice (ICTJ), and particularly the deputy director of the ICTJ's Prosecutions Program, Caitlin Reiger. To my eternal gratitude, USIP grant officer Taylor Seybolt, a champion throughout, agreed to the revised project plan, and the present volume was born.

Since evolving into a joint project, the collaboration between us – and the ICTJ as a whole – has been a joy. Marieke Wierda, Pablo de Greiff, and Graeme Simpson deserve particular thanks for encouraging Caitlin to take on the project. In October 2006, drawing on the ICTJ network of prosecution experts working on mass crimes, Caitlin and I cohosted a conference to enable the chapter authors to discuss their cases with one another and benefit from the insights and feedback of practitioners, many of whom had been



Preface xxi

involved in litigation against heads of state as prosecutors, activists, monitors, or victims' representatives. For their firsthand insights and reflections, we both thank Geoffrey Nice, Stuart Alford, Reed Brody, Nehal Bhuta, as well as ICTJ colleagues Ruben Carranza, Eduardo Gonzalez, Vasuki Nesiah, and Marieke Wierda. Tiasha Palikovic undertook the painstaking task of recording the conference proceedings, and the ICTJ's Richard Bailey and Laila Pedro pitched in during the conference and well beyond in ways too numerous to count, as did Nisma Zaman. Caitlin and I are deeply grateful for the help they provided.

The project also benefited enormously from the research assistance of Cambridge, Massachusetts—based research assistants Adam Day, Laura Roht-Arriaza, William Brennan Thomas, Abby Wood, and Paul Lewis, who researched the sixty-seven cases, and, in the case of Abby and Paul, contributed chapters to the volume. ICTJ interns Niki Ganz Moss and Eric Vang provided extraordinary service in the final days of the project, checking references and filling in missing citations, and Geoff Dancy assisted with the preparation of the charts and provided a fresh perspective on making sense of the numbers. Extra special thanks are due to our editor, Mark Cherrington, who is a grand master at saying things as simply as they can be said, and no simpler.

Thanks also are due to my former colleagues at Tufts University's Fletcher School, particularly Peter Uvin, director of the Institute for Humanitarian Studies, which sponsored the USIP grant and identified many of the outstanding interns who worked on the project; the many Fletcher students who assisted with the pre-grant research; Wendy Lekan and Fran Parisi who helped prepare the grant proposal and manage the grant; and Eileen Babbitt for her support throughout.

At the ICTJ, we had the benefit of many colleagues' enormously rich range of expertise and knowledge of the country situations considered in the book, which added to the depth of perspective that the authors' own firsthand experiences brought to the recounting of the case studies. For their generous responses to urgent queries and comments on drafts, Caitlin's and my heartfelt thanks go to Paul James Allen, Patrick Burgess, Javier Ciurlizza, Cristian Correa, Thierry Cruvellier, Leonardo Filippini, Eduardo Gonzalez, Priscilla Hayner, Bogdan Ivanišević, Juan Méndez, and Michael Reed.

Finally, the authors deeply appreciate the assistance of John Berger, our editor, and Paul Smolenski at Cambridge University Press, and of Mary Paden, Elizabeth Budd, James Diggins, and Diane Scent for their invaluable help in readying the manuscript for publication.

Ellen L. Lutz