

PRESS RELEASE



Milo Rau / IIPM – International institute of political murder
THE CONGO TRIBUNAL

- 29 - 31 May 2015, The Bukavu Hearings, Bukavu, Eastern Congo

- 26 - 27 June 2015, The Berlin Hearings, Sophiensaele, Berlin

In the form of a tribunal with an international cast and filmed on-location in Eastern Congo and in Berlin, the film "The Congo Tribunal" examines the causes and backgrounds for this, a war now ongoing for almost 20 years in the Great Lakes region. The result is a humanly harrowing, profound analytic tableau of the neo-colonial world order.

(Berlin, 2 dec. 14) Triggered by the Rwandan genocide of 1994 and based on the direct or indirect involvement of all of the great powers of our time, the Congo War, also referred to as the "Third World War", has claimed up to six million lives. Many observers not only see in it a fight about political predominance in Central Africa, but also one of the most decisive economic division-battles in the era of globalization. While the number of rebel armies involved may be intransparent, even more intransparent are the arms dealers operating in the supply lines, the role of foreign diplomats and humanitarian relief organizations, but also the involvement of multinational mining companies. Will one of the biggest and bloodiest economic wars of human history decide the future order of the global community?

For over 20 years, an unfathomable civil war has transformed an area the size of Western Europe into Hell on Earth: It is the Congo War, a war that has claimed the most victims of all wars since World War II. It first presented itself merely as a repercussion of the genocide in neighboring Rwanda and the subsequent fall of the Congolese dictator Mobutu. It soon developed into an ongoing massacre of the Congolese population. In its early stages the conflict was limited to a split among the genocide militias who fled Rwanda, before it developed into a globally networked, autonomous "economy of war", to which child soldiers armed with cheap Kalashnikovs and machetes belonged just as much as the German NGOs, biodiesel producers, Chinese commodity traders and Canadian mining companies.

This is because the reason for the continuation of the war in the Congo is no longer ethnic antagonism, but commodities, such as coltan, niobium or cassiterite, which were essential to survival in the upcoming 21st century. "Our mobile phone manufacturers lead in the Congo War", as the daily newspaper "Die Welt" summarized - because nowhere else are the deposits of coltan, which is crucial for communication technology, greater than in Eastern Congo. Coltan which is equally applicable as a base material for new technology that will go into mass production in the context of the "green revolution".

For the first time, "The Congo Tribunal" creates an unshrouded portrait of this, one of the most immense economic wars in human history, as well as of its economic and political causes and its tangible face on the ground. Why do all the efforts of the UN (which does not shy away from the term "genocide") and the processes against the militias conducted by the International Criminal Court remain completely ineffective? Is the reason perhaps that the war in the Congo is not being allowed come to an end that too many local and international players are involved in the booming commodity trade in the Eastern Congo?

In May 2015, "The Congo Tribunal" will bring together the main protagonists and analysts of the Congo War in Bukavu – the provincial capital of South Kivu, the province in the Congo most affected by the war – and one month later in Berlin for a large, three-day tribunal. Based in form on the Russell-Sartre Tribunal (1966) about the crimes of the Vietnam War and presided over by a half-Congolese and half-international panel of experts as well as the two leading human rights lawyers in the region, the central lines of the conflict in the Congo War will be examined based on hearings with victims, witnesses, militia officers, politicians, UN and NGO members, commodity traders and local human rights activists. Unlike the International Criminal Court or national courts, not only the local players, rebel leaders and low-rank soldiers will be held accountable before the Congo Tribunal but also their international accomplices who provided the supply lines for this atrocious civil war or prevented its cessation.

As in Milo Rau's film "The Moscow Trials", acclaimed by the international press, the subjects of the investigation are controversial and debated with an open end: Are the causes of the "African World War" to be found in a colonial past which has still not yet been overcome? To what extent is the energy revolution with its enormous demand for rare metals and biodiesel a declaration of war on the Congo region? And will one of the biggest and bloodiest economic wars of human history decide the future order of the global community?

With "The Congo Tribunal", Milo Rau completes his preoccupation with Central Africa, which he started with the theater, film and book production of "Hate Radio" (about the Rwandan genocide) in 2011 and, amongst others, with the 2013/2014 talk show series "The Berlin Dialogs". The international theatrical release of "The Congo Tribunal" will be at the beginning of 2016.

CONCEPT SCREENPLAY AND DIRECTOR Milo Rau RESEARCH AND CASTING Eva-Maria Bertschy PRODUCTION Arne Birkenstock STAGE DESIGN Anton Lukas CAMERA Thomas Schneider SOUND Jens Baudisch EDITING Anke Trojan PRODUCTION MANAGER CONGO TRIBUNAL Mascha Euchner-Martinez, Eva-Karen Tittmann RESEARCH ON LOCATION Chrispin Mvano, Kris Berwouts, Prince Muley FILM PRODUCTION MANAGER Kirsten Schauries ASSISTANT DIRECTOR Mirjam Knapp

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THE CONGO TRIBUNAL – is a film and theatre production of Milo Rau and the International Institute of Political Murder (IIPM). The film is a German-Swiss co-production of Fruitmarket Kultur und Medien and the IIPM with Langfilm and Schweizer Radio und Fernsehen SRF & Radio Télévision Suisse RTS. The theatre project is a co-production of IIPM and Sophiensaele Berlin, in cooperation with Zürcher Hochschule der Künste (ZHDK).

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