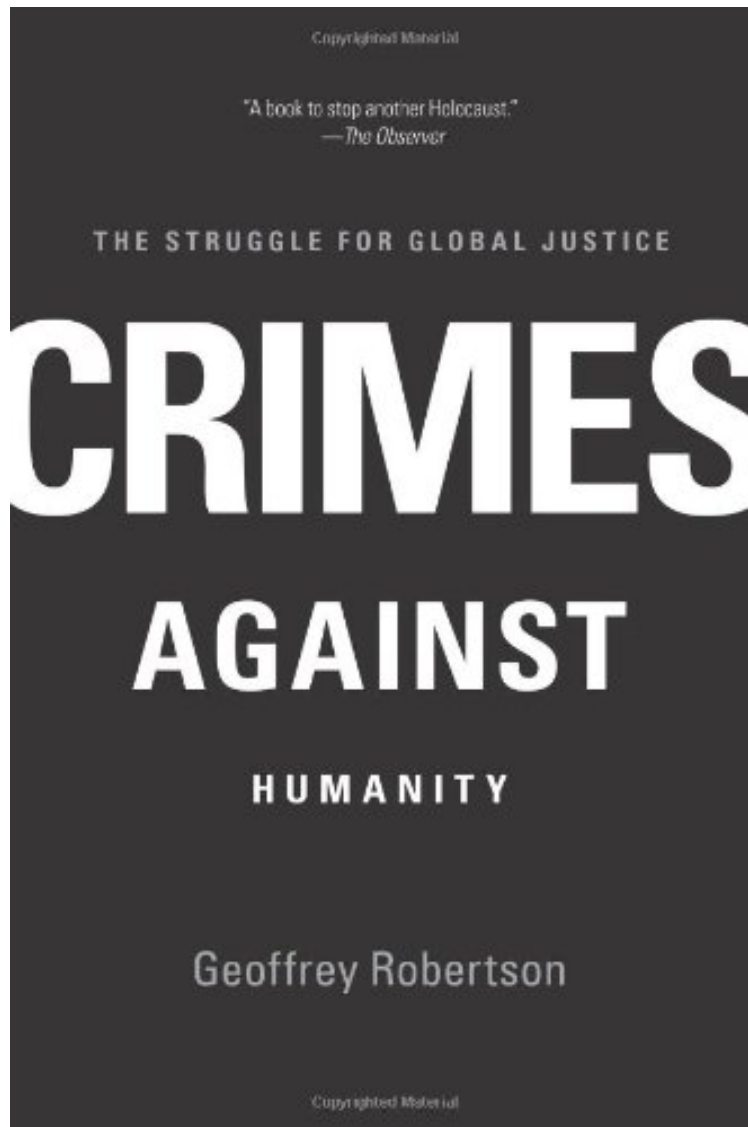


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# Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice

*Geoffrey Robertson*

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**Geoffrey Robertson : Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle for Global Justice:

0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Global human rights- where we've been and how far do we have to go!By T. WashingtonRecent events since this book's original publication(back in 1999) have only shown just how incredibly topical "Crimes Against Humanity: The Struggle For Global Justice" is- 9/11, the subsequent toppling of first the Taliban and then Saddam's Baathist regime in Iraq, the controversy over "enemy/unlawful combatants" in

"Gitmo", the hunting down and killing of Al Qaeda leader Osama Bin Laden by US Navy SEALs and the more recent conflict in the Ukraine. In his foreword Geoffrey Robertson, a respected British QC (Queen's Counsel) notes that he has been attacked by both ideologues and Right and Left (in an ironic but unholy tacit alliance between the relics of the "trendy lefties" such as John Pilger, Lindsey German of the grotesquely misnamed StopTheWarCoalition and right wing neocons such as Bush's UN Ambassador John Bolton), both of whom oppose any such thing as "universal human rights" far less an International Criminal Court- the Left because they argue that such issues are a stalking horse for "American imperialism"- how else can the STWC justify support not just for frankly illiberal if not tyrannical regimes such as North Korea or Putin's Russia but even virtually theocratic ones such as Taliban ruled Afghanistan,?- presumably due to their "progressive"- ie anti-Western if not anti-American attitudes)-the Right because American sovereignty presumes trumps that of any other countries- where else can you be prosecuted for trading with Cuba but presumably refusing to trade with the State of Israel- ignoring your own equally sovereign right to trade with whoever you please irrespective of whether it be a democracy or a dictatorship. To my mind (and to Mr Robertson's apparently), human rights will NEVER be a majority for the world's population as long as either Right and/Left alike insist on their demonstrably outmoded concept of exclusive state sovereignty for their pet police states be they proto-Stalinist North Korea or Saudi Arabia- in the immortal words of then US President Jimmy Carter's celebrated 1977 riposte to the late unlamented Leonid Brezhnev-"human rights are EVERYBODY's business!" To insist that a nation can do whatever it likes based on the rubric of "sovereignty" was always a dubious doctrine (even in the 1930s when Mussolini was bombing Ethiopia, Stalin purging millions in show trials or gulags and Hitler intensifying his persecution of Jews and other "untermenschen"- subhumans) but in the era of globalization, when practically every action of a given nation has ripple actions on any other (who paid any attention to an obscure oddball named Osama Bin Laden based in Afghanistan then ruled by a bunch of religious zealots known as the Taliban prior to 9/11's aftermath?) strikes both of us as being positively nonsensical (contrary to the fantasies of the likes of Eurosceptics such as UKIP that if Britain just leaves the EU and adopts a fortress UK policy all will be well). Ironically both Right and Left have the same unrealistic and outmoded attitude to "humanitarian intervention"- the Right, pace Pat Buchanan, thinks that America (and presumably Britain-pace Nigel Farage) is too good to get involved, the likes of Pilger, Pinter, German that America is too bad to get involved. My only complaint is that this book makes no reference to the regime change of Saddam Hussein in March 2003 (I hope a new edition will address this omission), but all in all, it is a rattling good read as to the beginnings of a global justice movement and the long way we still have to go before its final triumph. To quote the late Martin Luther King, whilst he may not get to see the promised land, he is certain that in the long run, we shall do so (given that four decades after his own death, the US elected -and reelected- its first African American President, he was undoubtedly prescient) and puts new meaning to his observation that the arc of the universe bends long but in the long run towards justice!

When it was first published in 1999, *Crimes Against Humanity* called for a radical shift from diplomacy to justice in international affairs. In vivid, non-legalistic prose, leading human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson made a riveting case for holding political and military leaders accountable in international courts for genocide, torture, and mass murder. Since then, fearsome figures such as Charles Taylor, Laurent Gbagbo, and Ratko Mladic have been tried in international criminal court, and a global movement has rallied around the human rights framework of justice. Any such legal framework requires constant evolution in order to stay relevant, and this newly revised and expanded volume brings the conversation up to date. In substantial new chapters, Robertson covers the protection of war correspondents, the problem of piracy, crimes against humanity in Syria, nuclear armament in Iran, and other challenges we are grappling with today. He criticizes the Obama administration's policies around targeted killing and the trials of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed and other high value detainees. By rendering a complex debate accessible, Robertson once again provides an essential guide for anyone looking to understand human rights and how to work toward a more complete blueprint for justice.

About the Author Geoffrey Robertson was the first president of the Sierra Leone Special Court (which indicted Charles Taylor) and has delivered important rulings on the illegality of recruiting child soldiers and the invalidity of amnesties. He was appointed as a distinguished jurist member of the UN's Justice Council in 2008, and he acted for Human Rights Watch in the Pinochet case. His clients have ranged from Salman Rushdie to Mike Tyson, and he is currently defending Julian Assange. Robertson lives in London.