

**UNTOLD TRUTHS: THE EXCLUSION OF ENFORCED STERILIZATIONS FROM THE PERUVIAN
TRUTH COMMISSION'S FINAL REPORT**

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By Jocelyn E. Getgen[†]

“[E]very society has the inalienable right to know the truth about past events, as well as the motives and circumstances in which aberrant crimes came to be committed” – GEOFFREY ROBERTSON, *CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY: THE STRUGGLE FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE* 281 (1999) (quoting the *IAC Annual Report* 193 (Sept. 26, 1986)).

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INTRODUCTION

Does time heal all wounds? Can a transitioning democratic society move forward without fully facing the human rights violations that plague its past? Or can only truth and justice reconcile large-scale abuses? Difficult lessons from the recent past have taught societies and nations that legitimate democracies require political and personal accountability reinforced by the rule of law.¹ International human rights treaties thus impose upon states a duty to

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investigate, criminally prosecute and punish perpetrators of crimes against humanity.² Although state actions taken in response to gross violations of human rights are never truly adequate when communities, families, and individuals suffer irreparable harms, inaction is invariably worse.³ A state's failure to respond appropriately and justly to gross human rights abuses can give victims the sense that their perpetrators emerged either victorious or with clean hands.⁴

The Peruvian government's response to twenty years of human rights abuses from 1980 to 2000 included creating a truth commission with a broad mandate to "explor[e] every fact opposing democratic freedoms and principles..." and to "creat[e] the necessary conditions for national reconciliation based upon justice."⁵ By forming the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (*CVR*),⁶ the state initiated a process of achieving national reconciliation through an attempt to correct the historical record, provide a collective memory and preserve the possibility of criminal accountability and justice.⁷

In many respects, the *CVR* is a model for future truth commissions that strive to end impunity, attend to the needs of victims, initiate state investigations and systemic reforms, gain a critical perspective to confront internal conflict and condemn individuals and institutions for

an understanding of the context of the internal conflict in Peru. Also, the author thanks her family and friends for their undying love and support. Finally, the author would like to dedicate this Note to the women of the world who have suffered and died as a result of government campaigns of enforced sterilization. May their voices be heard and may we move toward a world where reproductive justice and freedom are rights enjoyed by all.

¹ See JOHN BORNEMAN, *SETTLING ACCOUNTS: VIOLENCE, JUSTICE, AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN POSTSOCIALIST EUROPE* 3 (1997).

² See GEOFFREY ROBERTSON, *CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY: THE STRUGGLE FOR GLOBAL JUSTICE* 248–49, 265 (1999).

³ See MARTHA MINOW, *BREAKING THE CYCLES OF HATRED: MEMORY, LAW AND REPAIR* 15–16 (2002).

⁴ See *id.* at 16.

⁵ Supreme Decree 065-2001-PCM, Preamble (June 2, 2001).

⁶ *Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación*.

⁷ See MINOW, *supra* note 3. See generally PRISCILLA B. HAYNER, *UNSPEAKABLE TRUTHS: FACING THE CHALLENGE OF TRUTH COMMISSIONS* (2002); RICHARD A. WILSON, *THE POLITICS AND RECONCILIATION IN SOUTH AFRICA: LEGITIMIZING THE POST-APARTHEID STATE* (2001).

abuses.⁸ Although this Commission serves as an ambitious and inclusive mechanism for accountability and truth-telling, it fails to provide a record and voice to more than 200,000 marginalized, indigenous, Quechua-speaking women in Peru who were victims of a state-sponsored enforced sterilization campaign.⁹ The exclusion of large-scale human rights abuses committed against the poorest and most marginalized sectors of Peruvian society demonstrates a weakness of the *CVR*, impedes justice for these individuals, and provides further lessons for truth commissions of the future. With large-scale human rights abuses occurring in conflicts and transitioning regimes around the world—the internal and international conflicts in Iraq,¹⁰ for example—the transitional justice community must responsibly ensure that the collective memory includes all victims and that their voices are not silenced in the future processes of truth and reconciliation.¹¹

This Note argues that the exclusion of enforced sterilizations cases in the *CVR*'s investigation and Final Report effectively erases state responsibility and greatly decreases the likelihood that Peru will seek justice for the victims of these violations of reproductive rights. Part I provides an overview of the sharp cultural and economic divides in Peruvian society,

⁸ See COMISIÓN DE ENTREGA DE LA COMISIÓN DE LA VERDAD Y RECONCILIACIÓN, HATUN WILLAKUY: VERSIÓN ABREVIADA DEL INFORME FINAL 433 (2004).

⁹ Amnesty Int'l, *Peru: The Truth and Reconciliation Commission – a first step towards a country without injustice*, AI Index AMR 46/003/2004, 19–20 (August 2004). Aymaran women also comprised a relatively large number of victims of coercion during this campaign.

¹⁰ See, e.g., Cherif Bassiouni, *Postconflict Justice in Iraq*, 33 HUM. RTS. 15 (2006); Jennifer Moore, *Collective Security with a Human Face: An International Legal Framework for Coordinated Action to Alleviate Violence and Poverty*, 33 DENV. J. INT'L L. & POL'Y 43 (2004–2005); NGO Coordinating Committee & Oxfam Int'l, *Briefing Paper: Rising to the Humanitarian Challenge in Iraq* (2007), available at http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/18_07_07_oxfam_iraq.pdf (last visited Aug. 4, 2007).

¹¹ Cf. David M. Crane, *White Man's Justice: Applying International Justice after Regional Third World Conflicts* 27 CARDOZO L. REV. 1683, 1684 (2005–2006) (advocating for victims' central role in the truth, reconciliation and justice process). See generally KADER ASMAL, LOUISE ASMAL, & RONALD SURESH ROBERTS, RECONCILIATION THROUGH TRUTH: A RECKONING OF APARTHEID'S CRIMINAL GOVERNANCE (1996) (discussing the need for reconciliation through truth and the transitional justice process); JAMES L. GIBSON, OVERCOMING APARTHEID: CAN TRUTH RECONCILE A DIVIDED NATION? (2004) (discussing the truth and reconciliation process of transitional justice in South Africa); RUTI TEITEL, TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE (2000) (discussing various concepts of transitional justice and the rule of law in times of political change); Ruti Teitel, *The Law and Politics of Contemporary Transitional Justice*, 38 CORNELL INT'L L. J. 837 (2005) (reviewing contemporary developments in transitional justice).

examines the history of violent conflict in Peru from 1980 to 2000, and recounts how healthcare providers violated Peruvian women’s reproductive rights when they sterilized low-income, indigenous Quechua-speaking women either against their will or without informed consent through the State’s Family Planning Program. Part II discusses the creation and implementation of the *CVR* through its executive mandate. Part III challenges the reasons for excluding these cases in the Commission’s investigation and Final Report and also examines the effects of these omissions. Part IV proposes an independent inquiry with regard to these abuses and advocates a more inclusive investigation and final report for future truth commissions whose goals include truth, accountability and justice.

I. The Paths to Violent Conflict

A. Indigenous Peoples in Peruvian Society

Tawantinsuyu’s¹² destruction and Peru’s birth began when the Spanish Conquistadors invaded Incan lands, captured the last Incan ruler, Atahualpa, and massacred thousands of Incan warriors in the Andean city of Cajamarca in 1532.¹³ During the first one hundred years of colonial rule and oppression in Peru, the indigenous population in the Andes region plummeted from 9 million to 600,000 people.¹⁴ From this swift defeat and near destruction of the highland indigenous peoples of Peru emerged the myth of the “vanquished race:” that the Incas and their descendants lacked decision-making ability and individual initiative and, thus, “could or should be exterminated, ‘civilized,’ instructed, or saved”¹⁵

¹² *Tawantinsuyu* is the name of the pre-colonial Incan Empire. In Quechua, its literal translation is “four united nation-states.”

¹³ See THE PERU READER: HISTORY, CULTURE, POLITICS 81 (Orin Starn, Carlos Ivan Degregori & Robin Kirk eds., 1995).

¹⁴ *Id.* at 82.

¹⁵ *Id.* at 81.

Spanish colonial rule guaranteed impoverishment and death for many indigenous Peruvians and perpetuated the fragmented and divided structures that continue to exist in Peruvian society today.¹⁶ First, a geographical divide exists between the coastal region—predominately urban, white and Spanish-speaking—and the highlands—mostly rural, indigenous and Quechua-speaking.¹⁷ In addition, the coastal region boasts an overwhelming majority of the nation’s wealth and political power, and, as a result, political and economic programs in past regimes have largely ignored or neglected the needs of the indigenous peoples in the highlands and rainforest regions.¹⁸ Moreover, there are racial and ethnic gaps that divide Peruvian society among groups of Spanish descent (*criollos*), mixed Spanish and indigenous descent (*mestizos*), indigenous who have moved from the highlands to the urban centers of the country (*cholos*) and indigenous who continue to live a more traditional way of life in the highlands (*indígenas*).¹⁹

Although today indigenous groups are beginning to organize politically and socially to demand individual and collective rights from the state,²⁰ invidious discrimination and economic, cultural and social divides still exist at all levels of Peruvian society.²¹ In Peru, indigenous peoples continue to be seen as second-class citizens, a racist view established through these divides, their situations of extreme poverty, and the inadequate access to basic health care and education.²²

¹⁶ See *id.* at 112; HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, PERU UNDER FIRE: HUMAN RIGHTS SINCE THE RETURN TO DEMOCRACY 1 (1992).

¹⁷ See HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, *supra* note 16, at 1; Carlos Ivan Degregori, Commissioner, Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Address at the Cornell Law School 5–6 (November 28, 2005) (transcript available with the author).

¹⁸ See HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, *supra* note 16, at 1.

¹⁹ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 8.

²⁰ See generally MARÍA ELENA GARCÍA, MAKING INDIGENOUS CITIZENS: IDENTITIES, EDUCATION, AND MULTICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT IN PERU (2005) (discussing the issues surrounding indigenous organizing in Peru).

²¹ See ENRIQUE MAYER, THE ARTICULATED PEASANT: HOUSEHOLD ECONOMIES IN THE ANDES 322 (2002).

²² See *id.* at 322–23.

B. Twenty Years of Violent Internal Conflict in Peru

1. Setting the Stage for State-Sponsored Violence

Before the Peruvian government committed more than 200,000 enforced sterilizations against indigenous, Quechua-speaking women through its Family Planning Program during the 1990s, the internal conflict between insurgent groups and the state created a state of fear in which few openly questioned government policies. At first, violence in Peru erupted in 1980 when the armed government opposition group, the Shining Path,²³ initiated a political, “popular” war against the State.²⁴ At that time, Peru had begun its transition from a military dictatorship to a civilian democracy; however, the Maoist faction did not participate in the left’s incorporation into the political system.²⁵ Instead of taking part in elections, Shining Path members launched their communist-Maoist campaign by attacking the voter registration office in Chuschi, a small town in the central highlands of the Ayacucho province, before dawn on Election Day in 1980.²⁶ This political spark ignited a fire in a country with great disparity between rich and poor, abject rural poverty, geographic exclusion in the Andes and Amazon regions, and invidious discrimination and racism among ethnic and racial groups.²⁷

Next, the absence of a strong, unchallenged democratic transition, combined with the presence of the revolutionary movement of the Shining Path, caused the government to react

²³ *Sendero Luminoso*.

²⁴ See STEVE J. STERN, *Introduction to Part III, in SHINING AND OTHER PATHS: WAR AND SOCIETY IN PERU, 1980-1995* 261 (Steve J. Stern, ed., Duke University Press 1998); Degregori, *supra* note 15, at 5–6 (arguing that the CVR’s final report highlighted the political will of the Shining Path rather than digging deeper into the “structural violence” and poverty of the State. The analysis focused on these concepts as background and as a favorable condition. These reasons alone, however, were not seen as enough to explain the extent of the violence suffered. In addition, many social movements of the time used the structural factors and widespread poverty to justify violence. The Shining Path actually argued that the state and the Peruvian people should not chastise the group for killing some reactionaries when many more multitudes of people were dying of hunger and malnutrition each day in Peru).

²⁵ See GUSTAVO GORRITI, *THE SHINING PATH: A HISTORY OF THE MILLENARIAN WAR IN PERU* 11 (Robin Kirk trans., The University of North Carolina Press 1999).

²⁶ *Id.* at 17.

²⁷ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 7–8; Institute for the Humanities, *Human Rights, Political Violence and the Global South*, University of Michigan at Ann Arbor 7–9 (Nov. 4, 2004).

with authoritarian rule and military force, which then served to escalate the initial outbreaks of violence.²⁸ Fernando Belaúnde's newly-elected government, in response to increasing social unrest, imposed states of emergency in departments throughout the country.²⁹ In addition, the Armed Forces used racial profiling and killed indiscriminately in areas of conflict with the Peruvian government's knowledge and acquiescence.³⁰ In this context, the Shining Path gained support and momentum as some rural peasant communities began to view the guerillas as the lesser of two evils during the beginning of the armed struggle.³¹ In contrast, the atrocious firepower of the armed forces convinced other rural communities to back the state in the counterinsurgency.³²

At first, certain peasant communities, such as those in the district of Chuschi, also backed the Shining Path's efforts because the Shining Path's short-term goals aligned with their own: to drive out enemies in their towns who were gaining power, to establish better-quality schools, and to end government corruption.³³ To some communities, the revolution and "New Peru" meant that they would finally free themselves from abusive bureaucrats and public officials and return to the consensus framework with which traditional authorities governed in the past.³⁴ In time, however, the Shining Path began to reorganize peasant communities toward its ideology of a "future without distinctions" in class or wealth and to assume authoritarian power over them; as

²⁸ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 9; Eduardo Gonzalez Cueva, *The Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Challenge of Impunity 3* (Oct. 7, 2005) (unpublished manuscript, on file with the author) (noting that the combined action of guerilla organizations, military units and local police and defense forces acting under the command or acquiescence of the State actually caused the bulk of the deaths that the *CVR* estimates occurred during the whole twenty-year period).

²⁹ See HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, *supra* note 16, at 6.

³⁰ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 10.

³¹ See *id.* The slogan at the time was "Shining Path has one thousand eyes and one thousand ears while the State fights blindly." *Id.*

³² See Email from Eduardo Gonzalez, former Peruvian Truth Commission staff member (Mar. 5, 2006, 14:18 EST) (on file with author).

³³ See Billie Jean Isbell, *Shining Path and Peasant Responses in Rural Ayacucho*, in *THE SHINING PATH OF PERU* 71 (David Scott Palmer ed., 1994).

³⁴ See *id.*

a result, the Andean people saw the Shining Path as nothing more than new oppressors.³⁵ “. . . [I]nstead of becoming the revolutionary vanguard in the communities, Shining Path ha[d] been perceived . . . as a new form of *ñaña*, the supernatural being that robs body fat . . . in Andean mythology . . . to pay [off a] . . . debt.”³⁶ The Shining Path eventually lost what little peasant community support it had, and Andean citizens complied with military orders to organize civil defense patrols in order to resist the efforts of Shining Path insurgents.³⁷

The Shining Path focused its class war in the countryside, the “principal theater” of its actions, and complemented these efforts by supporting armed strikes and mobilizations in Lima.³⁸ At first, the Shining Path’s motives remained a mystery to most urban Peruvians; the cryptic messages—“Teng Hsiao-ping, son of a bitch”—wrapped around dead dogs hanging from streetlamps in Lima bordered on insanity to the majority of Peruvian citizens.³⁹ Soon, however, the dynamite attacks and killings intensified, and the uprising turned into a bloodbath that could no longer be underestimated or ignored, even by urban elites.⁴⁰

While the Armed Forces devised new strategies to defeat the Shining Path, the nation’s social and political composition shifted under the structural factors of a modernizing Peru.⁴¹ First, a significant number of Peruvians migrated from the rural areas to the cities, largely due to the development of a market economy, increased transportation and as displaced persons of the armed conflict.⁴² In addition, the relatively independent media⁴³ and political and social

³⁵ See *id.* at 72–73, 77.

³⁶ See *id.* at 74.

³⁷ See *id.* at 77.

³⁸ See GORROTI, *supra* note 25, at 68.

³⁹ See *id.* at 76, 78.

⁴⁰ See *id.* at 94–95, 104. The Shining Path developed the idea of the “quota”: the willingness and expectation of its members to sacrifice their own lives when the party asked them to. *Id.*

⁴¹ See Institute for the Humanities, *supra* note 28, at 11; Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 11–13.

⁴² See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 11. The number of *desplazados* (internally displaced persons) exceeded 600,000 at the height of the armed conflict.

organizations proved that some level of democracy existed and caused an intolerance of the totalitarianism of the Shining Path movement.⁴⁴ Finally, in 1992, the Peruvian secret police captured Abimael Guzmán, the leader of the Shining Path, who subsequently negotiated peace accords with the Fujimori government and facilitated the fast demoralization and defeat of Shining Path sympathizers.⁴⁵

Guzmán’s capture followed Alberto Fujimori’s election in 1990 and “self-coup” (*autogolpe*), which abruptly ended the rule of law in 1992.⁴⁶ Fujimori implemented a strategy to combat an economic crisis and government subversion; he suppressed civil liberties and eroded political institutions and notions of accountability.⁴⁷ Then, when faced with congressional opposition to his oppressive measures, he joined forces with the military, suspended the Constitution, censored the media, dissolved the National Congress, and incapacitated the judiciary.⁴⁸ Even after the capture of the leading subversives and the awareness of a crumbling insurgency, Fujimori’s repressive authoritarian regime used public fear and isolated incidences of violence to justify continued human rights abuses and political suppression throughout the 1990s.⁴⁹

⁴³ See HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH, *supra* note 17, at 3. The authors describe the media, the investigators and informal ombudsmen as the channel for opinion and information for Peruvian society.

⁴⁴ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 12. In addition, the Shining Path did not have an alternative to offer the peasant populations after the destruction of the “old order” and, in effect, the movement ignored the needs of the peasant families in the Andes.

⁴⁵ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 13; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 28. See also STERN, *supra* note 24, at 297.

⁴⁶ See Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 28; STERN, *supra* note 24, at 417.

⁴⁷ *Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, General Conclusions*, 332 (Aug. 2003) available at <http://www.cverdad.org.pe/ingles/ifinal/index.php> (last visited Jan. 21, 2006) [hereinafter *Final Report*].

⁴⁸ See Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 28; Kent Anderson, *An Asian Pinochet?—Not Likely: The Unfulfilled International Law Promise in Japan’s Treatment of Former Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori*, 38 STAN. J. INT’L L. 177 (2002)

⁴⁹ See *Final Report*, *supra* note 47, at 333; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 28; Interview with Eduardo Gonzalez Cueva, Senior Associate, International Center for Transitional Justice, former Director, Public Hearings and Victims and Witnesses Protection Unit, Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission, in N.Y., N.Y. (Oct. 27, 2005); Anderson, *supra* note 48, at 181.

2. State-Sponsored Enforced Sterilizations under the Family Planning Program: “Voluntary” Surgical Contraception (*Anticoncepción Quirúrgica Voluntaria – AQV*)

Three months after President Fujimori took office in 1990, he announced a “birth control policy” as a way to bring equal access to contraception for the nation’s poor.⁵⁰ At that time, however, high inflation, a lack of public funding, a focus on the internal conflict, and legal barriers in place against sterilizations forced the government to proceed slowly despite its support for reforms in family planning programs in Peru.⁵¹ Fujimori’s victorious reelection gave his regime a strong mandate for implementing its plans, and in 1995, Congress approved a modification of the National Population Law of 1985 to permit sterilization as a family planning method.⁵² At the same time, Fujimori garnered support from feminists and advocates for the rights of women when he attended and spoke at the Fourth International World Conference on Women (Beijing, 1995).⁵³

In 1996, after finding an inverse relationship between population growth and economic growth, Fujimori’s administration quietly implemented a demographic policy for population control.⁵⁴ A stable economy and widespread political support allowed Fujimori’s regime to openly confront the Catholic Church and its strong political positions with regard to reproductive

⁵⁰ Carlos E. Aramburu, *Politics and Reproductive Health: a Dangerous Connection*, 7 (Dec. 4, 2002) available at <http://www.cicred.org/Eng/Seminars/Bangkok2002/03BangkokAramburu.pdf>. The traditional demographic argument was coupled with the argument advocating for equal rights which focused on individual and family rights.

⁵¹ *See id.*

⁵² *See id.* at 8.

⁵³ *See* Maruja Barrig, *The Persistence of Memory: Feminism and the State in Peru in the 1990s*, Civil Society and Democratic Governance in the Andes and the Southern Cone Comparative Regional Project, Ford Foundation, Department of Social Sciences PUCP, 12–13 (Nov. 1999).

⁵⁴ *See* Anna-Britt Coe, *From Anti-Natalist to Ultra-Conservative: Restricting Reproductive Choice in Peru*, 12(24) REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH MATTERS 56, 61 (2004); Subcomisión Investigadora de Personas e Instituciones Involucradas en Acciones de Anticoncepción Quirúrgica Voluntaria, *Informe Final sobre la Aplicación de la Anticoncepción Quirúrgica Voluntaria*, 11 (June 2002).

rights and choice.⁵⁵ Additionally, international and domestic pressures existed to address the widening gap among socio-economic classes of Peruvians; thus, Fujimori's government promoted contraceptive services to all sectors of society in a stated effort to alleviate poverty on a massive scale.⁵⁶

During this time, Fujimori continued to actively promote universal access to contraception for women. His political discourse invoked principles of social justice and human rights; his rhetoric even included the using the reproductive justice movement's language, stating that "poor women deserved the same opportunity as wealthier women to regulate their fertility, and [that] all women had the right to control their bodies and use contraceptives if they wished."⁵⁷ With Fujimori's control over Congressional action, the Ministry of Health soon drafted its first comprehensive reproductive health program.⁵⁸ Additional government measures—including creating agencies and passing laws—also stressed the importance of equality between men and women.⁵⁹

The government's aggressive Family Planning Program focused on increasing the number of sterilizations performed on Peruvian women and specifically targeted the low-income, indigenous women at the margins of society.⁶⁰ Moreover, government officials determined

⁵⁵ See Coe, *supra* note 54 (asserting that when Fujimori first took power, he faced many challenges during the violent internal conflict, including fighting the insurgency, a weak economy and inflation. To address these concerns, Fujimori needed the backing of the Catholic Church (who of course opposed modern contraceptive methods)); COMITE DE AMERICA LATINA Y EL CARIBE PARA LA DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS DE LA MUJER (CLADEM) & THE CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE LAW AND POLICY (CRLP), SILENCE AND COMPLICITY: VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN PERUVIAN PUBLIC HEALTH FACILITIES 36 (1999).

⁵⁶ See Coe, *supra* note 54. A Program Manager at the Ministry of Health made the following statement in 1998:

"The fertility rate among poor women is 6.9 children – they are poor and are producing more poor people. The president is aware that the government cannot fight poverty without reducing poor people's fertility. Thus, demographic goals are a combination of the population's right to access family planning and the government's anti-poverty strategy." *Id.*

⁵⁷ *Id.*

⁵⁸ *Id.*

⁵⁹ *Id.*

⁶⁰ *Id.* at 62. See Amnesty Int'l, *supra* note 9, at 20.

annual numeric goals and targets for the sterilization programs and initiated an obligatory quota system for health care providers to meet as program employees⁶¹ in order to remain employed, to obtain monetary compensation, or to receive a promotion.⁶² Later investigations revealed that health care provider practices included compensating women and subjecting them to aggression, intimidation, and humiliation—all measures that did not include informed consent.⁶³ For example, health care providers denied women their fundamental rights to informed consent when professionals pressured women to undergo surgical sterilization during “Tubal Ligation Festivals” and at locations designated for food aid distribution.⁶⁴ Some providers offered women surgical sterilization as the only free method of contraception available.⁶⁵ Other health workers did not provide women with information regarding other available birth control methods and many times deliberately gave inaccurate information about the risks and consequences of surgical sterilization procedures.⁶⁶ Some women even reported that professionals in clinics and hospitals intimidated them as they sought medical attention for abortion complications.⁶⁷

The practice of state-sponsored enforced sterilization also caused numerous deaths due to medical negligence and malpractice.⁶⁸ Human rights groups brought one illustrative case, *María Mamérita Mestanza Chavez v. Perú*, to the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights when a thirty-three-year-old, low-income, illiterate woman with seven children died after a coerced

⁶¹ See Coe, *supra* note 54, at 62; Amnesty Int’l, *supra* note 9, at 20; CLADEM & CRLP, *supra* note 55, at 63.

⁶² See CLADEM & CRLP, *supra* note 55, at 63.

⁶³ See Coe, *supra* note 54, at 62. Coe is very careful and treads lightly on blame when talking about the abuses that occurred. She gives an example of services that withheld temporary methods of birth control, such as injections and birth control pills to promote sterilization. She does conclude by saying that “blatant deception, economic incentives and threats were also used,” but she does not mention the extent of the abuses. See *id.*

⁶⁴ See CLADEM & CRLP, *supra* note 55 at 63–64 (information taken from collective interviews of health care providers).

⁶⁵ See *id.*

⁶⁶ See *id.*

⁶⁷ See *id.* at 64.

⁶⁸ See *id.* at 36; Gonzalo E. Gianella, *¿Por qué tendría que haber sucedido de otro modo? Notas sobre esterilizaciones y genocidio en el Perú*, available at <http://www.andes.missouri.edu/andes/Ciberayllu.shtml> (last visited Jan. 19, 2006).

surgical sterilization procedure.⁶⁹ Health officials falsely accused Mestanza of violating the law by having more than five children and threatened to report her to the authorities if she did not submit to surgical sterilization.⁷⁰ Health care providers succeeded in coercing Mestanza to undergo a tubal ligation procedure and failed to examine her prior to the surgery.⁷¹ Following the tubal ligation procedure, the health center released Mestanza even though they were aware that she suffered from serious complications as a result of the surgery.⁷² A few days later, Mestanza's partner attempted to seek emergency medical care from physicians at the health center, but the physicians refused and reassured him that the effects of the anesthesia had not yet worn off.⁷³ As a result, Mestanza died in her home nine days after her surgical sterilization.⁷⁴

Coerced and forced sterilization practices contradict Peru's constitutional and legal protections for its citizens.⁷⁵ At first, human rights activists and non-governmental organizations criticized the government's focus on high numeric goals that were bound to lead to abuses because the practices were extremely secretive.⁷⁶ Later, women's advocacy groups documented the specific instances of abuse and sent their findings to the Public Ombudsman on Women's Rights.⁷⁷ Finally, in December 1997, *La República*, one of Peru's major newspapers, reported an

⁶⁹ María Mamérita Mestanza Chavez v. Perú, Case 12.191, Inter-Am. C.H.R., Report No. 66/00, OEA/Ser.L/II.111, doc. 20 rev. ¶ 1 (2000). See Center for Reproductive Rights, *Briefing Paper: Reproductive Rights in the Inter-American System for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights*, 12–13, (2002), available at http://www.crlp.org/pdf/pub_bp_rr_interamerican.pdf. [hereinafter Center for Reproductive Rights].

⁷⁰ See Center for Reproductive Rights, *supra* note 69.

⁷¹ See *id.*

⁷² See *id.*

⁷³ See *id.*

⁷⁴ See *id.*

⁷⁵ See Coe, *supra* note 54. These acts could be considered genocide as will be discussed herein. The Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948 defines genocide and includes imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such. The difficulty with proving these sterilizations as genocide is proving the specific intent to destroy the Quechua people. 78 U.N.T.S. 277. See Part III, B, *infra*, for further discussion.

⁷⁶ See Coe, *supra* note 54, at 63.

⁷⁷ See *id.*

independent investigation and detailed findings on the population policy implementation that shocked the public.⁷⁸

Once the general public became aware of the extent of Fujimori's demographic policy, a heated debate ensued.⁷⁹ The Ombudsman's office released a report in 1998 of its findings of abuse and recommended reforms in the government's family planning programs.⁸⁰ Other organizations then backed the report and also pressured the Peruvian government to take action to reform its policies.⁸¹ In March 1998, the Ministry of Health agreed to make changes and reform sterilization services; it eliminated the quotas and implemented new counseling guidelines, a consent form, a three-day waiting period before the procedure, a day to recover in a hospital after the surgery, and certification of health care facilities and physicians.⁸² Additionally, in 2001, the Peruvian government agreed to settle the case pending in the Inter-American Court of Human Rights by compensating María Mestanza's family and by taking responsibility for violating individual human rights, including the rights to life, physical integrity and humane treatment, equal protection, and the right to be free from gender-based violence.⁸³ As part of the settlement, the government promised to investigate other enforced sterilization cases and to punish those who had violated Peruvian and international law.⁸⁴

⁷⁸ *See id.* The title of the article was "Ligations in exchange for food."

⁷⁹ *See id.*

⁸⁰ *See id.*; Villanueva, R. *Anticoncepción quirúrgica voluntaria I: casos investigados por la Defensoría del Pueblo*. Serie Informes Defensoriales No. 7. Lima: Defensoría del Pueblo, 1998.

⁸¹ *See Coe, supra* note 54, at 63.

⁸² *See id.*

⁸³ *See* Center for Reproductive Rights, *supra* note 69.

⁸⁴ *See id.*

II. The Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission: Its Mandate and Findings

Soon after the government reformed its Family Planning Program, Peru's transition to democracy began in September 2000.⁸⁵ This regime change was not due, however, to public outrage at the atrocities committed during Fujimori's regime, but was largely the result of televised videos that uncovered a political corruption scandal and implicated high-level government and military officials, including Fujimori's top official, Vladimiro Montesinos.⁸⁶ Fujimori fled the country in November 2000 and resigned as president via fax from Japan.⁸⁷ Thus, unlike the Chilean or El Salvadoran transitions, Peru's was a total regime collapse without a negotiated arrangement, peace accord or guarantee of impunity.⁸⁸ The peaceful transition to Valentín Paniagua's interim government and the favorable conditions for democratic transition—the complete collapse of authoritarian rule and the absence of a powerful insurgency—provided an opportunity to critically examine the past and to establish a legitimate democratic regime that would guarantee future individual and collective human rights—including reproductive rights—in Peru.⁸⁹

In response to public and social group pressure, the newly-formed government established the Peruvian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (*CVR*)⁹⁰ in June 2001 to investigate human rights abuses committed during the twenty-year internal conflict.⁹¹ The

⁸⁵ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 14; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 49.

⁸⁶ See *id.*

⁸⁷ See Gianella, *supra* note 68; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 49. In the end, Congress did not accept Fujimori's letter of resignation and declared him morally unfit to serve as president. *Id.*

⁸⁸ Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 26, at 6. Fujimori, unlike Pinochet, was an exile without credibility.

⁸⁹ See *id.* at 7; Supreme Resolution 304-2000-JUS. Dec. 9. 2000.

⁹⁰ *Comisión de la Verdad y Reconciliación del Perú.*

⁹¹ See HAYNER, *supra* note 7, at 260.

CVR—composed of ten men, two women and one Quechua-speaker⁹²—was responsible for determining the conditions that gave rise to the violent conflict, contributing to judicial investigations, drafting reparations proposals and recommending reforms.⁹³ Specifically, the *CVR* mandate charged the Commission with “clarifying the process, facts and responsibilities of the terrorist violence and human rights violations produced from May 1980 to November 2000, whether imputable to terrorist organizations or State agents, as well as proposing initiatives destined to affirm peace and harmony among Peruvians.”⁹⁴ This broad and inclusive directive included interpreting and writing the collective memory of the historical period and fact-finding in individual cases.⁹⁵ The mandate also allowed the Commission to determine the appropriateness of identifying perpetrators who violated criminal law on condition that the responsibilities for such actions would be presumptive and would not replace the Public Prosecutor’s⁹⁶ investigation or a court’s determination.⁹⁷

One example of the expansive nature of the *CVR* mandate is the Commission’s sweeping subject-matter jurisdiction.⁹⁸ The list of crimes included the phrase, “and other serious injuries” after the crime of torture and the phrase, “[o]ther crimes and serious violations of the rights of individuals . . .” to possibly include further abuses of state power, such as sex crimes, forced

⁹² See Degregori, *supra* note 15. The one Quechua-speaker was Alberto Morote Sánchez, an engineer and an expert on Ayacucho.

⁹³ See HAYNER, *supra* note 7, at 260–1.

⁹⁴ Supreme Decree 065-2001-PCM. Article 1.

⁹⁵ See Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 26, at 8; Supreme Decree 065-2001-PCM art. 2.

⁹⁶ *Ministerio Público*.

⁹⁷ Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 49.

⁹⁸ Supreme Decree 065-2001-PCM. art. 3. “The Truth Commission shall focus its work on . . .

- a) Murders and kidnappings;
- b) Forced disappearances;
- c) Torture and other serious injuries;
- d) Violations of the collective rights of the country’s Andean and native communities;
- e) Other crimes and serious violations of the rights of individuals.”

internal displacements, due process violations and genocide.⁹⁹ Similarly, the decree authorized the *CVR* to focus on “[v]iolations to the collective rights of Andean and native communities in the country”¹⁰⁰ Moreover, the mandate broadly defined personal jurisdiction to leave open the possibility to examine acts committed by state agents, members of “terrorist organizations” and members of paramilitary organizations.¹⁰¹ This grant of jurisdiction was in direct opposition to Fujimori’s 1995 amnesty laws, which signified a possible end to the impunity that security forces had enjoyed under Fujimori’s regime.¹⁰²

The *CVR* embarked on the country’s largest and most ambitious human rights project in Peruvian history and clarified the magnitude of the atrocities committed by and against fellow Peruvians.¹⁰³ The Commission’s findings in its August 2003 Final Report included statistics showing almost 70,000 people killed and “disappeared,” and of those, more than 90% came from the eight poorest Andean and Amazonian regions.¹⁰⁴ In addition, more than 70% of victims spoke Quechua as their native language.¹⁰⁵ Thus, the findings demonstrated that victims of the armed conflict were overwhelmingly low-income, rural, indigenous peasants with little or no political or economic power in Peruvian society.

⁹⁹ *Id.*; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 49 (noting that the question as to what law to apply was hotly debated in the Commission’s Working Group. The Ministry of Justice included International Human Rights Law and International Humanitarian Law. The representatives of the security forces rejected the inclusion of the laws of war since implicitly that would give the twenty-year conflict internal armed conflict status).

¹⁰⁰ Supreme Decree 065-2001-PCM. art. 3

¹⁰¹ *Id.* at art. 1 & 3; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 28, at 9. Later talks would apply the “paramilitary groups” category to the several death squads that emerged during the two decades of conflict either indirectly or directly under the auspices of the armed forces. *Id.*

¹⁰² See Law 26479 of June 14, 1995; Law 26492 (compulsory interpretation of Law 26479) of June 28, 1995.; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 49.

¹⁰³ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 1. The *CVR* collected nearly 17,000 testimonies from across the country, conducted almost 2,000 interviews and talked to the main national political and military leaders during the conflict (1980-2000). *Id.*

¹⁰⁴ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 2.

¹⁰⁵ See *id.* The Final Report also gives the astonishing statistic that according to the 1993 census, only 16% of the Peruvian population shares that characteristic of being a native Quechua speaker from those specific regions of Peru. Also, the people from these regions together represent only 9% of the income of all Peruvian families. *Id.*

As for those responsible for the conflict and its outcomes, the *CVR* promoted a comprehensive and inclusive notion of accountability.¹⁰⁶ The Final Report found State limitations in protecting fundamental rights of its citizens and securing the public order, as well as breaches of the constitutional order and rule of law in numerous moments of crisis throughout the internal conflict.¹⁰⁷ Although the two terrorists groups—the Shining Path and the Túpac Amaru Revolutionary Movement—carried the bulk of the responsibility of systematic abuses and violence during the armed conflict, the Report also held state, political and social entities responsible for many of the gross human rights violations.¹⁰⁸

III. Truth Omissions from the *CVR*'s Final Report

A. Broad Mandate, Restricted Interpretation

Even with the *CVR*'s comprehensive and inclusive notions of accountability, leaders in various organizations in civil society criticized and questioned the Commission's decision to exclude cases of violations with ambiguous or tangential relations to the armed conflict in the Final Report.¹⁰⁹ Without a general policy to guide decision-making among the Commission's regional offices, commissioners drew different lines as to which cases to investigate and publish under the mandate.¹¹⁰ As a result, cases such as those of the enforced sterilizations during the Fujimori regime were not considered in the context of insurgency or counter-insurgency and thus were seen by some of the commissioners as outside the Commission's mandate and not included in the *CVR*'s Final Report.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁶ See *Final Report*, *supra* note 47, at 316–42.

¹⁰⁷ See *id.* at 317.

¹⁰⁸ See *id.* at 322–42.

¹⁰⁹ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 11.

¹¹⁰ See *id.*

¹¹¹ See Gianella, *supra* note 68 at 3; Guilia Tamayo, *Metas que matan* at <http://www.desco.org.pe/publicaciones/QH/QH/qh1111gt.htm>. During separate interviews, two of the Peruvian Truth Commission's Commissioners, Salomón Lerner Febres and Carlos Iván Degregori Caso, stated that they did not think that these enforced sterilization cases were within the Truth Commission's mandate. After looking at the text

Because the executive gave the *CVR* a sufficiently broad mandate to include state-sponsored enforced sterilizations, their omission was a self-imposed, interpretive—albeit inattentive—restriction on the Commission’s investigation and final report. Of course, truth commissioners must make certain choices as to which cases commissions investigate and report as a result of time constraints, resource limits, insufficient information, unreliable evidence, repetition of wrongs already documented elsewhere and political pressures.¹¹² Reports should not, however, exclude cases of gross human rights violations if the effects are to perpetuate discrimination, racism and classism as well as to impede justice, including reproductive justice, for victims. Rather, commissioners should make a careful and conscientious effort to investigate and report abuses committed against the most disenfranchised members of society, especially when their mandate so requires, but even when it is ambiguous. In the case of the *CVR*, its mandate’s broad language required an investigation of enforced sterilizations. Priscilla Hayner argues that:

[T]he practice of rape and other sexual crimes should be fully acknowledged in a commission’s report where it is believed such a practice was widespread. If a truth commission does not take special care in addressing this issue, it is likely that it will remain largely shrouded in silence and hidden from the history books—and also likely that few policy, educational, or reparatory measures will be put in place to assist past victims, increase the public understanding of the issue, or reduce the prevalence of sexual abuse in the future.¹¹³

In the cases of enforced sterilizations, the *CVR* did not make such a conscientious, inclusive effort. As a result, impoverished, indigenous, Quechua-speaking women continued to face multiple layers of discrimination—including social, racial and gender discrimination—first as

of the mandate once more, each one remarked that these cases could have been included in the mandate and that they were overlooked due to a lack of time and resources. Interview with Salomón Lerner Febres, former President of the Peruvian Truth Commission, in Lima, Perú (June 15, 2006); interview with Carlos Iván Degregori, former Commissioner of the Peruvian Truth Commission, in Ithaca, N.Y., U.S.A. (Nov. 28, 2005).

¹¹² See HAYNER, *supra* note 7, at 73.

¹¹³ *Id.* at 78–79.

victims and later as unrecognized victims of state repression and denial of basic human rights during the twenty-year internal conflict.¹¹⁴ Thus, the omission of enforced sterilization cases excluded women who were already members of socially and politically marginalized groups and greatly decreased their chances for truth, accountability and justice in Peruvian society.

The *CVR* commissioners could give reasons for excluding enforced sterilization cases from their investigation and report, such as the mandate's restriction or the repetition of other investigations or reports,¹¹⁵ but none should outweigh the reasons to include such widespread, state-sponsored violations of reproductive rights as part of Peru's official collective memory. First, commissioners did not see enforced sterilizations as an included crime in the truth commission's mandate.¹¹⁶ In contrast to the *CVR*'s inclusive mandate, the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) mandate intended to exclude all of the abusive practices of apartheid, especially with regards to detention without trial, racial segregation and the practice of "forced removals" of blacks to barren lands.¹¹⁷ Failing to include these and other apartheid practices in the final report, even where justified because the practices were already well-documented, "...prevented many South Africans from seeing their own personal experience reflected in the commission's work."¹¹⁸ Despite its restrictive mandate, the South African TRC held institutional hearings and found fault with some social and institutional structures of the apartheid system.¹¹⁹ This limited investigation, however, did not counter the South African TRC's inclusion of mostly extreme violence at the exclusion of a comprehensive investigation

¹¹⁴ See Amnesty Int'l, *supra* note 9, at 19.

¹¹⁵ In speaking with *CVR* Commissioners, they defended their non-inclusion of the enforced sterilizations cases by pointing to the separate investigations and reports written on the subject. This, however, is not a valid reason for exclusion since all cases of violence reported by the Commission required an independent and effective investigation as well. See Interview with Salomón Lerner Febres, *supra* note 109; interview with Carlos Iván Degregori, *supra* note 109.

¹¹⁶ See Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 26, at 8.

¹¹⁷ See HAYNER, *supra* note 7, at 73; WILSON, *supra* note 7, at 34.

¹¹⁸ HAYNER, *supra* note 7, at 73–74.

¹¹⁹ See WILSON, *supra* note 7, at 35–36.

and report on the widespread state-sponsored systematic abuses committed against many Africans.¹²⁰ This exclusion, as a result, hindered the TRC's goal to ensure truth and justice for the African majority.¹²¹

Unlike the South African TRC, however, the Peruvian *CVR*'s executive mandate did not limit the scope of investigations or reports to exclude enforced sterilizations.¹²² In fact, it specifically endorsed a broad mandate which could have included systemic abuses such as coerced surgical sterilizations.¹²³ Although the *CVR*'s Final Report did recognize the rights of women and the gross violations of human rights—including finding rape as an instrument of torture—committed against women largely by the Peruvian armed forces,¹²⁴ it still fell short by excluding gross, systematic human rights abuses of enforced sterilizations against mainly low-income, indigenous Quechua women. Because the decree did not make distinctions between those human rights violations directly related to insurgency or counter-insurgency measures and those violations tangentially related,¹²⁵ the commissioners should not have made such distinctions that have led to the exclusion of more than 200,000 cases of enforced sterilizations from the Commission's Final Report. In doing so, the Commission allowed Lima, the center of political discourse and public opinion, to remain “emotionally distant”¹²⁶ from these victims of state-supported violence and helped to further alienate many victims from the *CVR*'s work. In this regard, the *CVR* helps to perpetuate and legitimize physical, racial and class divides in Peruvian society, and impeded public support for accountability and reproductive justice through the rule of law.

¹²⁰ *See id.* at 35.

¹²¹ *See id.*

¹²² Supreme Decree 065-2001-PCM, art. 3.

¹²³ *Id.*

¹²⁴ *See Final Report, supra* note 8, at 71; Amnesty Int'l, *supra* note 9, at 18.

¹²⁵ Supreme Decree 065-2001-PCM, art. 1 & 3.

¹²⁶ *See Degregori, supra* note 17, at 3.

Additionally, the *CVR* commissioners' reasoning did not apply in all cases since they were inconsistent when they investigated and published other crimes Fujimori committed—largely in the context of political corruption and authoritarian rule—during his regime that may not directly relate to the insurgency or counter-insurgency.¹²⁷ Because incontrovertible evidence that demonstrated high levels of state and political corruption naturally affected Peruvians with economic and political power, public outrage and media coverage demanded that the *CVR* investigate and record those atrocities.¹²⁸ Therefore, those abuses of power became part of the historical record, and efforts today continue to push for accountability and criminal responsibility for the corruption crimes that Fujimori committed against Peruvians.¹²⁹ In the end, this inconsistency and selective treatment of cases demonstrates that, at least for the excluded victims of enforced sterilization, the truth-seeking process cannot be seen as “more than the reconfiguration of government pacts or domination between elites.”¹³⁰ As a result, in this version of reconciliation, the same speakers are speaking and the same voiceless victims are silenced.¹³¹

B. Enforced Sterilizations of Quechua Women as Genocide

1. The Elements of Genocide

When a Congressional subcommittee investigated cases of enforced sterilizations and issued its report,¹³² it accused the Fujimori regime of committing genocide against the Quechua

¹²⁷ See *Final Report*, *supra* note 8, at 72.

¹²⁸ See CATHERINE M. CONAGHAN, *FUJIMORI'S PERU: DECEPTION IN THE PUBLIC SPHERE* 229 (2005).

¹²⁹ See Raúl Rosasco, *Y Después de la CVR ¿Qué?: Informe seminal sobre las reacciones al informe final de la CVR y los avances respecto a sus recomendaciones*, 102:3 (November 14-20, 2005).

¹³⁰ KIMBERLY THEIDON, *ENTRE PRÓJIMOS: EL CONFLICTO ARMADO INTERNO Y LA POLÍTICA DE LA RECONCILIACIÓN EN EL PERÚ* 256 (2004).

¹³¹ See *id.*

¹³² See *Subcomisión Investigadora de Personas e Instituciones Involucradas en Acciones de Anticoncepción Quirúrgica Voluntaria, Informe Final sobre la Aplicación de la Anticoncepción Quirúrgica Voluntaria* (June, 2002).

people through the Family Planning Program.¹³³ There are arguments for and against classifying these cases of enforced sterilizations as acts of genocide, and these arguments will be discussed below. Ultimately, however, the victims of these human rights abuses need an impartial, independent investigation to take these issues out of the political realm and into the discourse of individual and collective reparations as well as reproductive justice.

First, the term “genocide” combines the Greek word *genos* (race or tribe) with the Latin suffix *-cide* (killing),¹³⁴ and is the “intentional killing, destruction or extermination of groups or members of a group....”¹³⁵ The crime of genocide is recognized as part of international customary law and a part of *jus cogens*, the body of peremptory international norms.¹³⁶ In addition, Article II of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide of 1948 defines genocide as follows:

[A]ny of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:

- (a) Killing members of the group;
- (b) Causing serious bodily or mental harm to the members of the group;
- (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- (d) *Imposing measures intended to prevent births within the group*;
- (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another group.¹³⁷

The definition deliberately omits acts of cultural and political genocide,¹³⁸ and the Convention provides an ineffective enforcement through domestic trials in the State where the genocide

¹³³ *See id.* at 108.

¹³⁴ KRIANGSAK KITTICHAISAREE, *INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW* 67 (2002).

¹³⁵ ANTONIO CASSESE, *INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW* 96 (2003).

¹³⁶ KITTICHAISAREE, *supra* note 134, at 67. Under international customary law, the United Nations summit in September 2005 adopted the Outcome Document, which affirms that every state is responsible for protecting its citizens from genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity. William A. Schabas, *Genocide, Crimes against Humanity, and Darfur: The Commission of Inquiry's Findings on Genocide*, 27 *CARDOZO L. REV.* 1703, 1703 (2005–2006).

¹³⁷ 78 U.N.T.S. 277 (1948) [hereinafter *Genocide Convention*] (emphasis added). The Convention does prohibit genocide in times of war, in times of peace and holds perpetrators (and other participants) of genocide criminally responsible while holding the state responsible as well. *See id.*

¹³⁸ Cultural Genocide is destroying a group's language or culture. Political Genocide is exterminating a group based on political grounds. *See CASSESE, supra* note 135, at 97.

occurred.¹³⁹ Much progress, however, has occurred at the international level to prosecute and punish perpetrators of genocide. For example, the statutes of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY), the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) and the International Criminal Court (ICC) provide for criminal action against perpetrators of genocide.¹⁴⁰ The *ad hoc* tribunals in the former Yugoslavia, Rwanda and Sierra Leone have tried individuals charged with genocide and have delivered landmark decisions that shape the evolving standards and norms for this crime against humanity.¹⁴¹

In order to prove genocide, victims must fall under one or more of the definition's enumerated groups.¹⁴² To determine whether an enumerated group exists in a particular case, a court may analyze subjective and/or objective criteria.¹⁴³ In a subjective analysis, the court uses a case-by-case analysis, "taking into account the relevant evidence and the political and cultural context of the society concerned."¹⁴⁴ For instance, in the case of Rwanda, the court examined the perceptions of Hutu and Tutsi members as well as Rwandan authorities adopted from colonial rule that Hutus and Tutsis belonged to two distinct ethnic groups.¹⁴⁵ Alternatively, the court may use objective facts that indicate a population is a group with a distinct identity, such as state recognition or customary practices.¹⁴⁶ In the case of Rwanda, the government required

¹³⁹ *Id.*

¹⁴⁰ *Id.* at 98.

¹⁴¹ *Id.* See *Prosecutor v. Jean-Paul Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4-T, ICTR T. Ch. I, 2 Sept. 1998; *Prosecutor v. Clément Kayishema and Obed Ruzindana*, Case No. ICTR-95-1-T, ICTR T. Ch. II, 21 May 1999; *Prosecutor v. Goran Jelisić*, Case No. IT-95-10, ICTY T. Ch. I, 14 Dec. 1999.

¹⁴² KITTICHAISAREE, *supra* note 134, at 69.

¹⁴³ *Id.* at 70–71.

¹⁴⁴ *Id.* at 71 (citing *Prosecutor v. Rutaganda*, Case No. ICTR-96-3, 6 Dec. 1999, para. 55).

¹⁴⁵ KITTICHAISAREE, *supra* note 134, at 71.

¹⁴⁶ *Id.* There were objective indicators in the Rutaganda case, such as identity cards carried by the Tutsi population as well as customary determination of group membership was patrilineal.

every citizen to carry identity cards displaying their ethnic identity as Hutu, Tutsi or Twa, and the country's legislation at the time referred to citizens by their respective ethnic groups.¹⁴⁷

In addition, a perpetrator commits genocide through the definition's enumerated discriminatory acts or omissions with the necessary *mens rea*.¹⁴⁸ These acts or omissions, however, do not necessarily involve the actual extinction or annihilation of the group, and motive is not an element of the crime of genocide.¹⁴⁹ Thus, the individual accused of genocide must have either known or should have known that "...his act or omission would destroy, in whole or in part [the] protected group."¹⁵⁰ In contrast to the crime against humanity of persecution, which requires a discriminatory intent, genocide requires that the prosecution prove the accused possessed the specific intent to destroy a particular group beyond a reasonable doubt.¹⁵¹

In order to prove genocidal intent, the prosecution must show that the accused wanted either to destroy a large number of group members or to exterminate a limited number of group members selected because their annihilation would greatly impact the group's survival.¹⁵² Thus, killing or sterilizing a large number of women group members who are of child bearing age can be considered genocide even though they do not comprise a large percentage of the group's population.¹⁵³ Also, the accused must form his specific intent to commit genocide before acting in furtherance of the genocidal intent.¹⁵⁴

¹⁴⁷ *Id.*

¹⁴⁸ *Id.* (citing *Akayesu*, para. 497; *Jelusic*, para. 62). Thus, failing to stop a massacre when the individual had the means and notice to stop it could be regarded as genocide.

¹⁴⁹ *Id.* at 71, 76. See STEVEN R. RATNER & JASON S. ABRAMS, ACCOUNTABILITY FOR HUMAN RIGHTS ATROCITIES IN INTERNATIONAL LAW: BEYOND THE NUREMBERG LEGACY 29 (2d ed., 2001).

¹⁵⁰ KITTICHAISAREE, *supra* note 134, at 72 (quoting *Akayesu*, para. 520).

¹⁵¹ *Id.*

¹⁵² *Id.* at 73.

¹⁵³ *See id.*

¹⁵⁴ *Id.* (citing *Prosecutor v. Clément Kayishema and Obed Ruzindana* (Case No. ICTR-95-1-T, ICTR T. Ch. II, 21 May 1999), para. 91).

Although the crimes committed must demonstrate genocidal intent, the prosecution can prove the element of intent by inferring from “. . . facts such as words or deeds or a pattern of purposeful action that deliberately, consistently, and systematically targets victims on account of their membership of a particular group while excluding the members of other groups.”¹⁵⁵ Evidence to construct genocidal intent may include the general context of other acts committed against the same group, the physical targeting of the group, the extent of bodily injury, the methodical nature of planning, and the scale of actual or attempted destruction of the group.¹⁵⁶ In the end, even though it is difficult to prove genocidal intent in the case of an individual backed by the state, proving the required specific intent for genocide is somewhat easier than originally anticipated through the use of circumstantial evidence.¹⁵⁷

2. Applying the Elements of Genocide under the Convention to the Case of Enforced Sterilizations in Peru

A strong case can be made that the enforced sterilizations of more than 200,000 low-income, indigenous, Quechua-speaking women were acts of genocide. First, the indigenous Quechua-speaking women are members of two protected groups enumerated in the definition of genocide since the Quechua people are a distinct racial and ethnic group in Peru.¹⁵⁸ The indigenous Quechua people objectively belong to a racial group since they share common, constant, and hereditary features, and are an ethnic group since they are “a community of persons linked by the same customs, the same language and the same race.”¹⁵⁹ Additionally, from a subjective analysis, the racial and ethnic divides among *criollos*, *mestizos*, *cholos*, and *indigenas*

¹⁵⁵ *Id.* at 74.

¹⁵⁶ *Id.*

¹⁵⁷ *Id.* at 74–75.

¹⁵⁸ See Genocide Convention, *supra* note 137, at art. II.

¹⁵⁹ See RATNER & ABRAMS, *supra* note 149, at 33 (quoting STÉFAN GLASER, DROIT INTERNATIONAL PÉNAL CONVENTIONNEL 111–12 (1970), *translated and quoted in* Study of the Question of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, prepared by Nicodéme Ruhashyamiko, July 4, 1978, UN Doc. E/CN.4/Sub.2/416, at 15–16).

in Peruvian society also contribute to the notion that the Quechua people are a distinct cultural group.¹⁶⁰ Although the overt motive behind Fujimori's Family Planning Program was to curb population growth and to alleviate poverty on a massive scale,¹⁶¹ it is clear that because motive is not an element of genocide, indigenous, Quechua women would not lose their protected group status.¹⁶² In other words, their protected status as members of a racial or ethnic group would override their status as a member of a particular social demographic. Therefore, the motive of population control would not negate an intention to prevent births within the group.¹⁶³ As a result, one could prove that Fujimori's Family Planning Program intended to prevent births among the Quechua people, despite his alleged motives.

Next, those individuals responsible for orchestrating enforced sterilizations against indigenous Quechua women arguably acted with the necessary *mens rea* to commit genocide since they knew or should have known that these coercive sterilizations would destroy, in whole or in part, the Quechua people.¹⁶⁴ Highly probative evidence with which one could infer genocidal intent would include the Family Planning Program's specific targeting poor indigenous women and the systematic nature of its quota system, articulated in the 1989 Plan for a Government of National Reconstruction, or "Plan Verde."¹⁶⁵ Specifically, the Plan stated that it was necessary to quickly curb population growth and mandate treatment for the "surplus beings [through a] generalized sterilization use among those culturally backward and

¹⁶⁰ See Degregori, *supra* note 17, at 8.

¹⁶¹ See Coe, *supra* note 54, at 56, 61.

¹⁶² Cf. RATNER & ABRAMS, *supra* note 140, at 35. These authors speak of "political groups" and do not speak specifically of poverty as a group. I feel and argue that the same could be said for poverty as a status incidental and not overriding a group's protected status.

¹⁶³ See *id.*

¹⁶⁴ KITTICHAISAREE, *supra* note 134, at 72 (quoting *Akayesu*, para. 520).

¹⁶⁵ See *Historia de una Traición: Muchos Misterios Quedarán Revalados al Conocerse el Plan Militar que Se Consolidó el 5-IV-92*, OIGA 21-35 (July 12, 1993); Amnesty Int'l, *supra* note 9, at 20.

impoverished groups.”¹⁶⁶ The Plan continued by arguing that because those individuals from the targeted areas possessed “incorrigible characters” and lacked resources, all that was left was their “total extermination.”¹⁶⁷ Seeking out particular groups to sterilize in violation of reproductive rights and imposing upon health care providers an obligatory quota system which caused coercive practices demonstrate a destructive pattern on the part of government officials to prevent births within the indigenous Quechua-speaking population. Moreover, under Fujimori’s population control program, there existed a clear pattern of victims—namely poor, indigenous, Quechua-speaking women—a high level of planning at the state level through the formal Family Planning Program and a high number of victims considering there are less than 10 million Quechua-speakers in Peru¹⁶⁸ and only a small percentage of the group’s population is of child bearing age.

On the other hand, there are legal and practical concerns with classifying the enforced sterilization of Quechua women as an act of genocide. For example, one could argue that the state did not administer population control and family planning programs toward Quechua women at the exclusion of other racial and ethnic groups from enforced sterilization procedures.¹⁶⁹ This argument is weak, however, because perpetrators of genocide can theoretically have the specific intent to destroy more than one protected group under the auspices of a single state-sponsored plan to eradicate poverty and curb population growth through

¹⁶⁶ *Historia de una Traición*, *supra* note 165, at 30 (author translation). The Plan reads in Spanish: “Ha quedado demostrado la necesidad de frenar lo más pronto posible el crecimiento demográfico y urge, adicionalmente, un tratamiento para los excedentes existentes: utilización generalizada de esterilización en los grupos culturalmente atrasados y económicamente pauperizados . . . Los métodos compulsivos deben tener solo carácter experimental, pero deben ser norma en todos los centros de salud la ligadura de trompas . . . Hay que discriminar . . . estos sectores, dado su carácter de incorrigibles y la carencia de recursos . . . solo queda su exterminio total.” *Id.*

¹⁶⁷ *Id.*

¹⁶⁸ El Instituto Nacional de Estadística e Informática, *2005 Censo: Resultados Preliminares* (2005), <http://www.inei.gob.pe/home.htm>.

¹⁶⁹ *See* Amnesty Int’l, *supra* note 9, at 20. Indigenous Amazonian were also among those who reported enforced sterilization procedures. *Id.*

sterilization procedures. Also, as a practical matter, conservative groups in Peru and abroad who oppose contraception and reproductive choice for women have capitalized on their classification of the Voluntary Surgical Contraception program as an act of genocide.¹⁷⁰ As a result, international human rights advocates who promote accountability and justice for crimes against humanity and genocide must make strategic choices since their decisions and actions could negatively affect future reproductive rights, choice and health among Quechua women who have already been victims of state enforced sterilization campaigns.

C. Enforced Sterilizations as Violations of Individual Human Rights

Aside from the viable claim that the systematic enforced sterilizations against Quechua women constituted an act of genocide, these actions also implicate numerous other violations of human rights, including reproductive rights, at national, regional and international law. Legal instruments that obligate Peru to protect women against enforced sterilization include, but are not limited to, the Peruvian Constitution,¹⁷¹ the American Convention on Human Rights (American Convention),¹⁷² International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR),¹⁷³ the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR)¹⁷⁴ and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).¹⁷⁵

¹⁷⁰ See Center for Reproductive Rights, *supra* note 69; Coe, *supra* note 54, at 65; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 49. In speaking with Eduardo Gonzalez, I also learned that the leader of the investigation was an Opus Dei-conservative Catholic with an agenda to expose Fujimori's population policies.

¹⁷¹ Political Constitution of Peru, entry into force Dec. 31, 1993 [hereinafter Peruvian Constitution].

¹⁷² American Convention on Human Rights, O.A.S. Treaty Series No. 36, Nov. 22, 1969, 1144 U.N.T.S. 123 [hereinafter American Convention]. In addition, the Convention of Belem do Pará protects women against all forms of violence, including violence within the health care system. See Inter-American Convention on the Prevention, Punishment and Eradication of Violence Against Women, 33 I.L.M. 1534, June 9, 1994 [hereinafter Convention Belem do Pará].

¹⁷³ International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, Dec. 16, 1966, 999 U.N.T.S. 171 [hereinafter ICCPR].

¹⁷⁴ International Covenant on the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, Dec. 16, 1966, 993 U.N.T.S. 3 [hereinafter ICESCR].

¹⁷⁵ Convention on the Elimination of All forms of Discrimination against Women, Dec. 18, 1979, 1249 U.N.T.S. 13 [hereinafter CEDAW]. The Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women recognizes "that some groups of women, such as women belonging to minority groups, *indigenous women*, refugee women, migrant women, women living in rural or remote communities, destitute women, women in institutions or in detention,

The protective provisions enumerated within these instruments include those that protect the right to personal autonomy, privacy, bodily integrity and autonomous decision-making in women's reproductive lives.

For instance, the Peruvian Constitution guarantees all Peruvians the right to dignity; life; moral, psychological, and physical integrity; liberty and security of the person; and to be free from all forms of violence and from torture, inhuman or degrading treatment.¹⁷⁶ Thus, the State has the duty to respect, protect and fulfill these rights through national laws and legal mechanisms to investigate and punish violations. In the case of enforced sterilizations, the Peruvian government has enacted laws to protect women;¹⁷⁷ however, these laws are not enforced and violators continue to enjoy impunity from punishment.¹⁷⁸ Even though abuses such as enforced sterilizations have been documented, public authorities have dismissed the violations as isolated incidents, and health care professionals paternalistically defend their actions as beneficial to their patients and "intended to avoid greater injury to the patient."¹⁷⁹ In light of these protections, women victims of enforced sterilizations have viable claims at the national level to remedy the wrongs committed against them.

Many of these national protections, however, are unenforceable or inaccessible to the low-income women-victims of the Voluntary Surgical Contraception program.¹⁸⁰ Thus,

female children, women with disabilities, elderly women, and women in situations of armed conflict, are especially vulnerable to violence." Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women at pmbi., G.A. Res. 48/104, U.N. GAOR 3d Comm., 48th Sess., Supp. No. 49, U.N. Doc. A/48/49 (Vol. I) (1993) (emphasis added).

¹⁷⁶ See Peruvian Constitution, *supra* note 171, at arts. 1, 2(1), 2(24)(a) & 2(24)(h).

¹⁷⁷ See, e.g., Peruvian Penal Code, promulgated by Legislative Decree No. 638, Apr. 3, 1991, art. 376 (abuse of authority); General Law on Health, promulgated by Legislative Decree No. 26842, July 15, 1997, arts. 4, 6, 15, 26, 27, 40 (protecting rights to life and health). There is no crime of infliction of suffering on patients by health care providers. See CLADEM & CRLP, *supra* note 55, at 42–43.

¹⁷⁸ See CLADEM & CRLP, *supra* note 55, at 42–43.

¹⁷⁹ CLADEM & CRLP, *supra* note 55, at 43.

¹⁸⁰ See *id.* at 41–48; see generally, CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS & ESTUDIO PARA LA DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS DE LA MUJER (DEMUS), WOMEN OF THE WORLD: LAWS AND POLITICS THAT AFFECT THEIR REPRODUCTIVE LIVES, LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN 170–92 (1997); CENTER FOR REPRODUCTIVE RIGHTS & ESTUDIO PARA LA DEFENSA DE LOS DERECHOS DE LA MUJER (DEMUS), WOMEN OF THE WORLD: LATIN AMERICA

complaints to regional or international human rights bodies are also valid and actionable claims.¹⁸¹ The American Convention, for example, protects individuals' rights to life; personal integrity; health; to provide free and informed consent; privacy; equality; and non-discrimination.¹⁸² Public health care providers violated these rights when they performed unnecessary surgery on women-victims without obtaining informed consent, as well as when, in certain circumstances they failed to perform preliminary examinations or to give post-operative care, which ultimately led to death and disability for women-victims.¹⁸³

Under the Civil and Political Rights Covenant, Peru has committed itself to respect, protect and fulfill their citizens' civil and political rights, including the rights to life, non-discrimination, gender equality, freedom from torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; liberty and personal security; and privacy.¹⁸⁴ Additionally, the Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Covenant protects the rights to non-discrimination, equality and health.¹⁸⁵ Similarly, under the Women's Convention, or CEDAW, Peru guarantees rights to women that protect against enforced sterilization under Articles 5, 12 and 16, which are further articulated in General Recommendations 19, 21 and 24.¹⁸⁶ For example, in General Recommendation 19, the CEDAW Committee asks states to take measures to "prevent coercion in regard to fertility and

AND THE CARIBBEAN PROGRESS REPORT 2000 83–102 (2001) (reporting on the laws regarding reproductive health and lives of women in Peru).

¹⁸¹ First, in order for a complaint to be admissible, the applicant must prove that she has exhausted all local remedies or that special circumstances exist that make exhaustion of local remedies impossible. For a more complete explanation, see Thomas Buergenthal, *The U.N. Human Rights Committee*, 5 MAX PLANCK UNYB 341, 364–81 (2001). See also, Velásquez Rodríguez (July 29, 1988), Inter-American Court of Human Rights (Ser. C) No. 4.

¹⁸² See American Convention, *supra* note 172, at arts. 4, 5, 7, 11, 24.

¹⁸³ See Center for Reproductive Rights, *supra* note 69, at 12–13 (2002).

¹⁸⁴ See ICCPR, *supra* note 173, at arts. 2, 3, 6, 7, 9 & 17.

¹⁸⁵ See ICESCR, *supra* note 174, at arts. 2, 3, & 12.

¹⁸⁶ See *Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*, General Recommendation No. 19, U.N. GAOR, 11th Sess., Supp. No. 38, at 1, U.N. Doc. A/47/38 (1993), para. 22 [hereinafter CEDAW General Recommendation 19]; *Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*, General Recommendation No. 21: Equality in Marriage and Family Relations, U.N. CEDAWOR, 13th Sess., U.N. Doc. A/47/38 (1994), para. 22; *Report of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women*, General Recommendation No. 24: Women and Health, 20th Sess., U.N. Doc. A/54/38 (1999), para. 22.

reproduction”¹⁸⁷ All of these state duties at international law give individual women-victims of enforced sterilizations the ability to hold the Peruvian government responsible for the human rights violations committed against them.

The Peruvian government has officially acknowledged state responsibility for violations of international law under the American Convention when it settled the case of *María Mamérita Mestanza Chavez v. Perú*.¹⁸⁸ Specifically, the settlement agreement recognized state violations of the victim’s rights to life, physical integrity, humane treatment, equal protection of the law and freedom from gender-based violence.¹⁸⁹ Although settlement agreements with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights are not binding jurisprudence at international law,¹⁹⁰ these recognitions of state responsibility are highly persuasive admissions to use in any further legal action at the regional or international levels. Moreover, the Peruvian government undertook to investigate and punish those responsible for the violations as well as to reform legislation and create procedures to handle patient complaints within the health care system.¹⁹¹ As a result, ongoing rights violations are occurring as long as Peru fails to implement these changes and deny women-victims their rights at national, regional and international law.

D. The Need for an Independent and Impartial Investigation

The *CVR* commissioners recognized that other bodies within Peru’s government and civil society either had conducted or were in the process of conducting their own investigations and reports on the cases of enforced sterilizations.¹⁹² Although a Congressional subcommittee and numerous activist groups investigated and published testimonies and cases condemning the

¹⁸⁷ CEDAW General Recommendation 19, *supra* note 185.

¹⁸⁸ See *María Mamérita Mestanza Chavez v. Perú*, *supra* note 69.

¹⁸⁹ See *id.*; Center for Reproductive Rights, *supra* note 69, at 16 (2002).

¹⁹⁰ See American Convention, *supra* note 172, at art. 48.

¹⁹¹ See *María Mamérita Mestanza Chavez v. Perú*, *supra* note 69.

¹⁹² Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 49.

state's Family Planning Program and its health care providers,¹⁹³ members of each of these bodies had a specific political or social interest in advocating certain positions and conclusions. In contrast, the *CVR* was in a unique and disinterested position to evaluate, as it could have based "conclusions and recommendations on a close study of the record, while standing as an independent institution separate from the systems under review."¹⁹⁴ Opinion polls in Lima confirmed the public confidence in the performance of the *CVR* and the positive impact the public saw the Final Report have on Peru.¹⁹⁵ In addition, most individuals opined that the government should implement the *CVR*'s recommendations for reparations, reform and justice.¹⁹⁶ The *CVR*'s widespread public support and overall legitimacy helped create some institutional momentum to keep the possibility of criminal justice and accountability open for the future,¹⁹⁷ but only for those cases investigated and reported. Thus, the exclusion of state-sponsored enforced sterilizations in the Final Report effectively impeded future criminal judicial action for thousands of marginalized Quechua women in Peru.

The conservative Congressional Committee members who submitted the final report on conclusions and recommendations in cases of state-led enforced sterilization campaigns have politicized these human rights abuses and have used human rights language to strategically restrict reproductive choice for Peruvian women through repeals of laws that make surgical sterilization a legal option for reproductive choice in Peru.¹⁹⁸ As mentioned above, these conservatives are utilizing their investigation and report on human rights abuses to recommend committing further human rights abuses against women.¹⁹⁹ During the current Toledo regime,

¹⁹³ See CLADEM & CRLP, *supra* note 55.

¹⁹⁴ See HAYNER, *supra* note 7, at 29.

¹⁹⁵ See Amnesty Int'l, *supra* note 9, at 27.

¹⁹⁶ See *id.*

¹⁹⁷ See *id.*

¹⁹⁸ See Center for Reproductive Rights, *supra* note 69; Coe, *supra* note 54, at 65; Gonzalez Cueva, *supra* note 49.

¹⁹⁹ See Center for Reproductive Rights, *supra* note 69; Coe, *supra* note 54, at 65.

reproductive rights and health advances have nearly halted.²⁰⁰ For example, new policy initiatives stress abstinence-only methods for sexually transmissible infection (STI) prevention and natural methods for family planning.²⁰¹ In addition, government agencies have stopped promoting gender equality and sexual health education, and health officials have impeded access to services and information on modern methods of contraception.²⁰² These programs and future strategies have further subordinated women in Peruvian society and have increased reliance on natural reproductive methods and unsafe abortions.²⁰³

Including the cases of enforced sterilizations in the *CVR* Final Report or even creating a separate impartial truth commission investigating and reporting these state-sponsored abuses could have served to prevent claims of genocide from instilling fear and causing a conservative backlash in reproductive rights issues. In addition, including these cases in the Commission's report could have created a legitimate independent declaration of human rights abuses as acts of genocide and as individual violations of reproductive choice and health.²⁰⁴ Moreover, including these cases could have kept these human rights atrocities out of the political arena and in the hands of the victims who deserve retribution, reparations and reconciliation. Although including these abuses would not have guaranteed a tangible victory for the victims or their families, it would have constituted a moral, symbolic victory for low-income, rural Quechua women and a step forward in an uphill battle for recognition as Peruvian citizens. Though the Peruvian government has issued a public apology for its mass sterilization campaign,²⁰⁵ excluding these

²⁰⁰ See Coe, *supra* note 54, at 65.

²⁰¹ See *id.*

²⁰² See *id.* For example, HIV prevention was part of a "Risk Reduction" program that included malaria, dengue and other infectious diseases. *Id.*

²⁰³ See *id.* Coe also proposes that US policy shifts toward the far right have only made matters worse for reproductive rights in Peru. *Id.*

²⁰⁴ These are the two main arguments put forth by investigations and advocates.

²⁰⁵ See Center for Reproductive Rights, *supra* note 69; Coe, *supra* note 54, at 65. Also, for a discussion on the issues and problems surrounding reparations and public apologies, see MINOW, *supra* note 3.

cases from any commission of inquiry greatly reduces the possibility of individual accountability for the perpetrators and justice for the victims of enforced sterilizations in Peru.

CONCLUSION

A distinctive feature of truth commissions is their focus on victims, reconciliation and healing as well as their reporting to create a framework to ensure transitional justice as a mechanism to deal with a nation's past human rights abuses.²⁰⁶ One problem, however, is that truth-telling can never be comprehensive enough to encompass all of the competing perceptions of past events.²⁰⁷ In addition, healing and justice—especially in the field of reproductive rights and justice—seem incompatible and unworkable where victims have no political power or economic means to reconcile and rebuild their communities.²⁰⁸ Complex analyses by truth commissions, however, can produce a record and collective memory to prevent future human rights violations,²⁰⁹ and the exclusion of certain abuses creates a void in the attempt at finding truth, reconciliation and justice for transitional states.²¹⁰

For more than 200,000 indigenous Quechua-speaking women in Peru, time has not healed their wounds of the past. These individuals deserve a legitimate, independent, and thorough investigation of the human rights abuses committed against them. Even if a lack of resources impedes the possibility for adequate monetary reparations or legal action for reproductive justice, a good faith inquiry to uncover the truth and an acknowledgement of past wrongs would constitute an important symbolic victory for indigenous rights, reproductive rights

²⁰⁶ See MARTHA MINOW, *BETWEEN VENGEANCE AND FORGIVENESS: FACING HISTORY AFTER GENOCIDE AND MASS VIOLENCE* 60–61 (1998).

²⁰⁷ See *id.* at 62.

²⁰⁸ See *id.* at 63.

²⁰⁹ See Jeremy Sarkin & Erin Daly, *Too Many Questions, Too Few Answers: Reconciliation in Transitional Societies*, 35 COLUM. HUM. RTS. L. REV. 661, 665 (2004) (citing RECONCILABLE DIFFERENCES: TURNING POINTS TO ETHNO POLITICAL CONFLICT (Sean Byrne & Cynthia Irvin eds., 2000); LOUIS KRIESBERG, *CONSTRUCTIVE CONFLICTS: FROM ESCALATION TO RESOLUTION* (2003)).

²¹⁰ See MINOW, *supra* note 206, at 78–79.

and human rights for the indigenous, Quechua peoples of Peru. Restoring dignity and recognizing individual rights of Quechua women could succeed as one small step toward bridging the economic, racial, and ethnic divides that continue to perpetuate inequality, discrimination and hatred among Peruvians.

Official acknowledgment of the truth is extremely powerful in the healing process, especially in an atmosphere previously dominated by official denial.²¹¹ If this is the case, then no official acknowledgment of truth after official denial can be equally powerful in impeding reconciliation and healing. When truth commissions deprive certain individuals or groups of the opportunity to have their stories entered into the historical record, they effectively—even if inadvertently—deny victims access to the public and political discourse and leave victims disempowered in their struggle for justice and accountability. Future truth commissions, thus, should ensure that the marginalized victims in society do not remain silenced and alienated in the creation of the historical record and collective memory. When forgotten, history does have a tendency to repeat itself.

²¹¹See HAYNER, *supra* note 7, at 27.