

SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
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PRESS CLIPPINGS

Enclosed are clippings of the latest local and international press on the Special Court and related issues obtained by the Press and Public Affairs Office as of:

Wednesday, July 21, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
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Awoko

Wednesday July 21, 2004

17-year-old testifies at the Special Court

In the ongoing trial of the Revolutionary United Front at the Special Court at 17-year-old boy yesterday testified how rebels captured him and was recruited into the Small Boys Unit (SBU)

during the war. The witness who was born in a village called Madina Loko said that in 1998 he was attending school in Makeni and was on holidays at his village when they heard that the

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17-year old testifies at Special Court

From Front Page

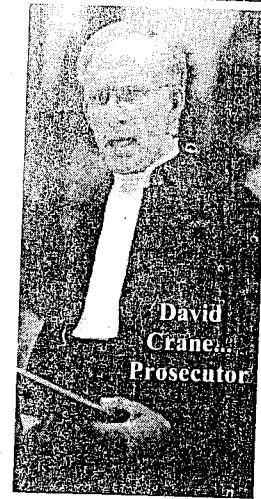
rebels have attacked followed by gunshots and heavy bombardment. "My family and I went to the bush and made a temporal camp where we stayed for a while," he said. The witness went on to say that he and his brothers were caught on their way from the stream after fetching water. He went on, "we met a group of rebels along the road with guns and some were wearing combat hats while others tie red cloths on their guns." The witness who was 12 years old at that time said that the rebels whose number he cannot say told them that they should go back to the village (Madina Loko). "At the village we met some other people whom the rebels have already captured with the houses burning and smoke coming from them. The rebels took properties from the burning houses and they started amputating the limbs of the older people in the village. My uncle was even killed as I saw him lying in a pool of his own blood," he went on to narrate. "Those who were amputated were released and told to go to the Government as they would provide medical services for them. We the young boys (all aged under 18) were told that we are going to be trained to become SBUs," he explained. He said that they then went to another

village were the rebels again burnt the houses and took their properties. They were then lined up he said and each of the commanders choose the boys they would like to have as bodyguards, "I was chosen by one commander, Lt. Marah who said he was going to train me." He said that as they were traveling they passed through many villages including Karina, Fadugu and unto Bafodia with the rebels threatened to kill them if they try to escape. "At Bafodia we met another group of over 300 rebels each commander and subjects in their own house. The other boys and I were then trained how to use a gun and I was given an AK 47 by my commander," he said. The 17-year-old boy went on to tell the court of their duties as an SBU, which he said include to go on food-finding missions, doing domestic work guarding their commanders and going on attacks. He said that his commander would take him on attacks, and on food-finding missions and at night they would change shifts in guarding their commanders; each SBU standing for five hours. He said that during attacks the rebels also captured

young girls whom they use as their wives, adding that his commander did not only rape girls in front of him but also forced him to have sex with girls at that young age. He said it was in 2000 that he together with some other child combatants were handed over to UNOMSIL by Brig. Mani (a rebel) who was the commander in charge of that area. They were then taken to Lunsar and placed under Caritas Makeni and after three months they heard about the kidnap of the UN troops in Makeni so they decided to escape from that area together with the Caritas staff. "On our way we saw truck load of rebels heading towards Freetown wearing the uniforms of the UNOMSIL soldiers and the UN people were in these trucks naked," he said. He went on further to say that they were taken to Freetown and then to Lungi and put in an interim care center where a family tracing program was organized for them but his own family was not found.

Special Court...

Child soldier testifies



BY THEOPHILUS GRENDA
The sixth prosecution witness in the ongoing RUF trials, TF1-199, a former child soldier has testified how he

was abducted by rebels in 1998 and made to become a child soldier.

In his testimony, the witness aged 12 years at the time of his

abduction and now 17 years old, said he was on a holiday break to his home town of Madina Loko in the Bombali district when suddenly they

were alerted by heavy bombardment. Following this, the witness, who made his testimony by video link, said
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he and his family sought refuge in a nearby forest where they built a temporal shelter.

Whilst at the camp, the

witness explained, he and his smaller brother were sent to go fetch water at a nearby stream, and while they were returning were halted by a number of armed men

dressed in mixed colours and placed under gun point, searched, striped off of the small money they had, and ordered to follow them to Madina Loko.

On arrival, the witness recalled that they met houses on fire and he saw his uncle's corpse lying in a pool of blood.

The witness further recalled how about forty of them were lined up and placed in two categories, namely elders and children.

The elders, the witness said, were taken for military training while eighteen of them who were children were made into a unit called the small boys units (SBU), and divided amongst various commanders.

According to the witness, he was under the command of one Lt. Marah.

The following day, they were all taken to Bafodia in the Koinadugu district where Colonel Savage was the ground commander and Bragadier Gabriel Mani the overall commander

Whilst at Bafodia, alongside other child abductees,

they were used for food finding, domestic jobs and as ammunition carriers when ever they want to go on attacks.

According to him, he was personally forced by his commander, Lt. Marrah into drug use and sexual abuse of captured girls.

The witness recalled following his commander on a number of attacks including one at Kabala.

The witness noted that he made an attempt to escape at one time but was caught and threatened with death if at any time he attempt to escape again.

"I only got my freedom when, following a meeting in Kabala with some UNAMSIL peacekeepers, the overall comamnder, Bragadier Mani ordered all the men under his control to turn over all child soldiers to the peacekeepers, the witness said.

Standard Times

Wednesday July 21, 2004

Wednesday, July, 21, 2009

REBELS CARRIED HUMAN HEADS IN BAGS- Court Told

By Mohamed Mansaray

A prosecution witness has narrated at the Special Court how a number of children were captured by rebels, beheaded and their heads dumped into a river.

The fifth prosecution witness in the joint trial of RUF indictees, TF1-064 disclosed that rebels carried human heads in a bulgur bag from Fendor to Tombodu in the Kono district between 1997 and 1999. The witness did not say exactly how many heads were in the bag. Led in evidence by Prosecution Counsel, Christopher Santora at Court Room No. 1, New England in Freetown on Monday, the witness told the court that the heads of her two children were also in the bag. She told the court that three grand children of her husband's sister-in-law and three other children were all murdered in Fendor. The witness told the court that she also saw the corpses of her father-in-law, mother-in-law, her father-in-law's nephew and the father of the man who led the rebels. She informed the court that an adopted child of a woman was also slaughtered. Giving testimony in Kono through an interpreter, the witness told the court that they were initially abducted in the bush by the rebels and taken to Fendor. On arrival in the town, the witness told the court that the rebels asked them to place their children under an orange tree while the adults were put in a house and guarded. "The children were crying and after some time there was no more crying," she said. According to the witness, she was the last person to be taken outside and all what she saw were the corpses of the children. The witness further revealed that the Chief of

Fendor was also taken out of the house and murdered, adding that the others were also taken out one after the other and killed. "I was the last person to be taken out of the house and I saw the unburied corpses lying around including the body of my child," she said, adding that the rebels asked her to laugh.

The witness who wept during her testimony also revealed that the human heads were placed in a bag and put on the head of a boy to be taken to Tombodu to the rebel boss, who was later slaughtered. The boy was later killed.

"When we arrived in Tombodu, they opened the bag and I saw the heads of my children," she told the court in tears. She said that the heads were counted and given to a woman to throw into the river but that she could not recall how many heads there were. The witness named one Tamba Joe as the man who led the rebels to capture them. She told the court that a man who was abducted by the rebels asked her to have sex with him but that she initially refused because according to her she was a lactating mother. "They flogged me and I eventually had sex with the man after they forcibly opened my legs," she told the court, adding that her child was standing by her during her ordeal.

Born at Kwako, Gbense Chiefdom in the Kono district, the witness told the court that the rebels who captured them in the bush were many but could not give figures. She told the court that the rebels initially had plans to kill her but that she was rescued. The witness went on to tell the court that she escaped from rebel captivity in Tombodu after they forced her to marry to an old man against her wish

Taylor can be prosecuted by global crimes tribunal

Special Court has authority to charge former Liberian president

FORMER Liberian president Charles Taylor, accused of crimes against humanity in connection with a rebel insurrection in neighbouring Sierra Leone, can be prosecuted by an international war crimes tribunal, a United Nations-backed court in Sierra Leone ruled, reports the New York Times.

Taylor's lawyers had argued that a court in one country had no right to try the head of state of another country. But the four judges on the appeals panel of the special court for Sierra Leone rejected that argument, ruling that as an international tribunal, the special court does have that authority. The ruling clears the last legal hurdle for the prosecution, but another more daunting one remains.

Nigeria, which has sheltered Taylor since he stepped down as president of Liberia in August 2003, has so far rebuffed demands to turn him over to the court in Sierra Leone.

Nigeria President Olusegun Obasanjo has said only that he would return his guest to his home country if the Liberian courts sought to prosecute him. Liberia, which emerged from 14 years of crushing civil war with Taylor's departure, has issued no such request.

The Financial Times, London, writes that Liberia's parliament could vote on a motion calling on Gyude Bryant, chairman of the country's transitional government, to request Taylor to be extradited from Nigeria. Foreign government have brought little pressure for his extradition since he fled Liberia as rebels surrounded Monrovia, the capital.

The New York Times reports that Taylor's lawyer in Freetown, Sierra Leone's capital, declined to comment on the special court's ruling. "I haven't read the report, so how can I comment on it?" said the lawyer, Terrence Torry.

The special court was created jointly by the United Nations and the government of Sierra Leone to punish the ringleaders of that country's decade-long war. Taylor is the most prominent among 11 people indicted so far. He faces 17 counts of murder, rape and other crimes against humanity in connection with the support he reportedly gave the rebels in Sierra Leone.

"With this decision, Charles Taylor has no more legal cards to play," said Richard Dicker, Director of International Justice for Human Rights Watch, based in New York. "The time has come for Nigeria to hand Taylor over to the Special Court." AP reports that Reed Brody,

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also from Human Rights Watch, said it "puts dictators in Africa and elsewhere on notice that if they commit similar crimes, they will not be shielded from international justice."

Culled from BUSINESS DAY AFRICA

Independent Observer

Wednesday July 21, 2004



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AFRICA

No peace in Liberia until Côte d'Ivoire disarms

Zoom Dosso | Monrovia

20 July 2004 14:53

Liberia's security will remain precarious until concentrated efforts are made to disarm next-door Côte d'Ivoire, General Daniel Opande, the Kenyan military commander for the UN mission in the west African state, said.

"I can assure you that at the end of our mission in Liberia, we will have collected all the arms, but the country will remain at risk if in Ivory Coast the guns are still in the hands of the wrong people," said Opande.

Fighters and arms have slipped easily across the forested border since late 2002 to help Gbagbo put down a rebellion in the west of Côte d'Ivoire and recruit reinforcements to wage the second of two civil wars to pummel Liberia since 1989.

And while a peace pact signed in August last year has muted concerns that conflict will erupt again in Liberia, the same cannot be said for Côte d'Ivoire, which remains suspended in a state of near-war 22 months since a failed coup against President Laurent Gbagbo in September 2002.

Rebels who still hold Côte d'Ivoire's north have refused to disarm despite the presence of some 4 000 French troops and a mounting number of United Nations peacekeepers.

Humanitarian aid workers say that a new prefect has been installed by the Gbagbo government in the border town of Guiglo who has been sympathetic to the Liberian rebels in preparation for a resumption of war in Côte d'Ivoire's west.

Diplomats and non-governmental organisations insist that the weapons smuggling continues, by fighters prepared to either take up arms should war in Côte d'Ivoire resume or to eventually hand them over to the UN peacekeeping mission there, which will offer greater incentives once disarmament begins.

Fighters turning in weapons in Liberia are granted a \$300 stipend along with vocational training or schooling and food rations, while over the border they would receive \$900 for their participation in the disarmament programme.

UN peacekeepers moved into southeastern Grand Gedeh county on July 9 to begin disarming the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (Model), a splinter rebel movement known to have been backed by Gbagbo in their battle against Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president now in exile in Nigeria.

The force commander resisted confirming incidents of cross-border smuggling, choosing instead to point to successes by the Ethiopian peacekeepers operating in southeastern Liberia as well as by joint border patrols with both Côte d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone.

Opande has been a major advocate of a cooperative approach to

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peacekeeping in the troubled west African subregion, convening regular meetings with his regional counterparts in a bid to stem the flow of weapons and fighters.

"We have seized a good quantity of weapons including mortar guns, rocket-propelled grenades and other arms that were hidden and we have interdicted arms from moving from one point to another," Opande said.

"We are quite satisfied with the process going on in Grand Gedeh as the number of arms turned in is ... the most encouraging so far, because the ratio is 1,8 combatants for every arm [handed to peacekeepers]." - Sapa-AFP

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ZIMBABWE

Zim 70's trail set for Wednesday

Ryan Truscott

Posted Tue, 20 Jul 2004

Seventy men held in a top security jail in Zimbabwe, and charged with plotting a coup in the oil-rich central African country of Equatorial Guinea, are due to go on trial in Harare on Wednesday, four months after their capture.

The men were arrested on March 7 at Harare International Airport when their Boeing 727 stopped off to pick up weapons from Zimbabwe's state-run arms manufacturer.

Sixty-seven men aboard the plane, and three others who allegedly came to meet the plane, were accused by the Zimbabwean authorities of being on their way to overthrow President Teodoro Obiang Nguema.

SA passports

The men, all travelling on South African passports, include former apartheid-era soldiers. Their countries of origin include Angola, Namibia, South Africa, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Zimbabwe.

The alleged leader of the group is Briton Simon Mann, a former member of the crack Special Air Service (SAS) regiment who also set up private security outfits in the 1990s that protected Angolan oil installations from rebels and were involved in Sierra Leone.

The men deny the charges against them and claim to have been on their way to guard mining operations in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

While the trial will shed some light on what the "Harare 70" were up to, it could have little to do with the men's ultimate fate.

Once tried in Zimbabwe, attention will turn to whether President Robert Mugabe will grant a request from Equatorial Guinea to hand over the men for trial in Malabo where they face a possible death sentence or a long jail term in the country's notoriously harsh prisons.

Days after their arrest in Harare, Obiang announced the capture of 15 men he claimed were an advance party for the 70 alleged soldiers of fortune being held in Harare.

Confession

A "confession" from the leader of the Malabo group, South African Nick du Toit, apparently implicated the "Harare 70".

The saga of the suspected mercenaries in Harare and Malabo has prompted calls from governments across Africa to put an end, once and for all, to private armies, with South Africa showing its determination to root out mercenaries.

It was Pretoria intelligence officials who tipped off Zimbabwe authorities about the plane that took off from South Africa where the men are believed to have undergone training.

Zimbabwe has charged the men under its security, firearms, immigration and aviation laws. If convicted, they could face a fine or a five-year jail term, lawyers say.

Real mission

Speculation on the real mission of the 70 has been rife since their arrest. One theory suggested they were off to capture former Liberian president Charles Taylor, in exile in Nigeria.

State prosecutors, however, told the court the men were in the pay of Severo Moto, Equatorial Guinea's exiled opposition leader, who was to be installed as new ruler of the oil-rich nation after the overthrow of Obiang.

Defence lawyers claim the men in Harare were tortured by state agents into making confessions admitting their involvement in the plot. In court the detainees have stuck to the story that they were security guards, hired in South Africa, on their way to the DRC.

They needed the weapons purchased in Harare — which included rocket launchers, hand grenades and machine guns — to fight off rebel attacks that dog mining pursuits in unstable countries, the court has heard.

Dressed in khaki prison garb, shackled in pairs, the men have shuffled around a dozen times into the makeshift courtroom for pre-trial appearances at Chikurubi Maximum Security Prison outside Harare amid waning outside interest.

Relatives' plight

For the men's relatives in neighbouring South Africa, it's a different story. They have been actively trying to get the men out of Zimbabwe to stand trial before a South African court, which they say is their constitutional right.

Lawyers representing the families failed in June to force the South African government to seek their extradition back home.

They are appealing that decision before the Constitutional Court in South Africa.

This story was printed from channelnewsasia.com



Title : No peace in Liberia until Ivory Coast disarms: UNMIL commander Opande

By :

Date : 21 July 2004 0202 hrs (SST)

URL : http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stories/afp_world/view/96705/1/.html

MONROVIA : Liberia's security will remain precarious until concentrated efforts are made to disarm next-door Ivory Coast, General Daniel Opande, the Kenyan military commander for the UN mission in the west African state, said.

"I can assure you that at the end of our mission in Liberia, we will have collected all the arms, but the country will remain at risk if in Ivory Coast the guns are still in the hands of the wrong people," Opande told AFP in an interview.

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Rebels who still hold Ivory Coast's north have refused to disarm despite the presence of some 4,000 French troops and a mounting number of UN peacekeepers.

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Opande has been a major advocate of a cooperative approach to peacekeeping in the troubled west African subregion, convening regular meetings with his regional counterparts in a bid to stem the flow of weapons and fighters.

"We have seized a good quantity of weapons including mortar guns, rocket-propelled grenades and other arms that were hidden and we have interdicted arms from moving from one point to another," Opande said.

"We are quite satisfied with the process going on in Grand Gedeh as the number of arms turned in is... the most encouraging so far, because the ratio is 1.8 combatants for every arm (handed to peacekeepers)."

UNMIL spokesman Patrick Coker told AFP on Tuesday that so far 56,888 fighters from three warring

factions have enrolled in the disarmament process since it resumed in April after an abortive start last December.

In the Grand Gedeh capital Zwedru, some 40 kilometers (24 miles) from the Ivory Coast border, roughly 2,000 fighters have been disarmed since the process began 10 days ago.

- AFP

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U.N. WIRE

UNITED NATIONS FOUNDATION National Journal

Counterterrorism Cooperation Improving, Security Council Told

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By Jim Wurst, *U.N. Wire*

UNITED NATIONS — The chairman of the Security Council's [Counterterrorism Committee \(CTC\)](#) said yesterday that the committee is improving cooperation with other international counterterrorism organizations to more effectively combat terrorism. However, several speakers at the council briefing, including the United States, complained that many governments are not doing enough to maintain a united international front against terrorism.

Alexander Konuzin, the Russian charge d'affaires who is serving as chairman of the CTC, said cooperation between the CTC and other Security Council sanctions committees is improving and that the committee is also developing greater coordination with the Counterterrorism Action Group of the G-8 industrial countries. "That would open the way for the most effective use of the resources of the donor community," he said.

[Resolution 1373](#), adopted less than three weeks after the September 2001 terror attacks on the United States, requires states to deny terror suspects safe haven for themselves or their finances, cooperate in investigations of terrorism and incorporate antiterrorism provisions in their national laws. The CTC was established to monitor compliance with that mandate.

The resolution also calls on states to submit reports to the CTC on their compliance with resolution. According to the latest CTC report, 71 countries have not submitted reports to the committee on their national activities relevant to Resolution 1373. Countries that have not submitted reports are generally developing countries that say they lack the resources needed to do the report.

Konuzin urged countries that have not yet done so to ratify [12 terrorism conventions](#). "Encouraging states to become parties to the relevant conventions and protocols relating to terrorism ... has remained one of the priorities in the work of the committee," he said. The increasing number is "an important contribution to the strengthening of the international legal basis for the fight against terrorism."

U.S. Ambassador John Danforth said while there has been a "significant increase" in the number of parties to the terrorism conventions, "there are still too many who have failed to take action in this area." He added, "This suggests a lack of urgency in fighting terrorism and weakens international solidarity."

Compliance with Resolution 1373 "requires much more than the submission of reports," said Danforth. It includes action on "the legislative, the regulatory and the operational" fronts. The CTC needs to "reinforce this point," he added.

"It must never forget that so long as a few states are not acting quickly enough to raise their capacity to fight terrorism or are not meeting their international counterterrorism obligations, all of us remain vulnerable," said Danforth.

Konuzin said the CTC and the committee set up under [Resolution 1267](#) to monitor sanctions against al-Qaeda and the Taliban are exploring ways to improve the work of both committees. Chilean Ambassador Heraldo Munoz, who chairs the al-Qaeda and Taliban sanctions committee, said the two committees are "resolved to improve the cooperation," especially in information sharing. The United Nations needs "perseverance ... and coordination of action," he said, but "this can only be achieved through the necessary and fundamental cooperation of states and the competent organizations."

Konuzin also said the committee is ready for its first visit to a state "in order to engage in direct dialogue with its authorities as part of monitoring effective implementation of Resolution 1373." He

did not say whether the committee had decided which country to visit first. "Such a mission would be essential for the purposes of creating a climate of cooperation and providing technical assistance," he said.

"The CTC should not be viewed as some kind of inquisition, quite the contrary," said Konuzin. "We deem it necessary to develop the most friendly relationships with states."

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