

**SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE**  
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

**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:**

Tuesday, August 10, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
Ibrahim Tommy  
Ext 7248  
MOBILE: 232 76 645 914



# ThisDay News

Dateline: 10/08/2004 03:40:17

[< Back](#)

## Taylor's Terrorist Ally Arrested in Pakistan

*From Marlene Burger in Pretoria, South Africa*

Top al-Qaeda terrorists were sheltered by former Liberian warlord Charles Taylor while they built up a war chest from trading in diamonds, United Nations prosecutors claim.

Among those who found refuge in the West African state was Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, arrested 10 days ago in Pakistan in an anti-terror swoop that also netted two South Africans, Dr Faroz Ganchi and Zubair Ishmael.

Ghailani, who had a \$25 million bounty on his head, hid out in Liberian military camps from late 1998 until shortly before Taylor was forced to step down a year ago, according to the UN. American authorities had no idea where he was after the bombing of US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania, which he masterminded, until the day-long gun battle on July 25 in the Pakistani city of Gujrat between security forces and an al-Qaeda cell that included women and children.

The two South Africans, whose families say they were in Pakistan on a hiking holiday, were among those rounded up.

While intelligence agencies in the US, Britain, Pakistan and South Africa are playing their cards close to their chests over the most recent crackdown on suspected terrorists, details are emerging of a global operation that was launched in the middle of May by America's CIA (Central Intelligence Agency), and culminated in arrests on three continents last week.

It is not yet clear whether the dramatic announcement in May by South African police commissioner Jackie Selebi that several suspected al-Qaeda members had been deported to Jordan, Syria and Britain formed part of the worldwide hunt for Ghailani, another East African bomber, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed and a woman, Dr Aafia Siddiqui, who were believed to be planning a new wave of attacks on key targets in the US, Britain and South Africa.

Nor have authorities said whether or not Mohammed and Siddiqui are among those arrested in the past week.

What is known is that the address of the safe house in Gujrat, reportedly rented by Dr Ganchi soon after he arrived in Pakistan from Johannesburg on July 10, was obtained from Mohammed Naem Noor Khan, 25, a "computer genius" who headed al-Qaeda's electronic communications network. Khan was arrested in Karachi on July 1 and forced to cooperate with his interrogators.

According to reports, he was "persuaded" to send out encrypted e-mails to al-Qaeda operatives all over the world, asking them to contact him urgently. As their responses flooded in, authorities began rounding up suspects.

They also notified intelligence officials in Dubai that the busy airport in the United Arab Emirates was being used by members of al-Qaeda cells as a transit point.

Ganchi and Ishmael flew from South Africa to Pakistan via Dubai on July 10, while a South African woman, Farida Goolam Mohamed

Ahmed, travelled to London from Johannesburg via Dubai just two days earlier. A week later, she flew to Mexico City and was arrested on July 18 in Texas after wading across the Rio Grande River into the US illegally. Ahmed, whose name was on an FBI (Federal Bureau of Investigation) watch list, was refused bail and is being interrogated pending her next court appearance at the end of the month.

Late on Friday a Tanzanian national, Shafa Ibrahim, was arrested at the airport in Lahore as he prepared to board an aircraft bound for Dubai, from where he intended flying to South Africa.

Since the arrest early last year of Kenyan embassy bomber Khalfan Mohammed in South Africa, American authorities have repeatedly warned that the African continent is the next battleground against al-Qaeda, due to the porous borders and Islamic sympathies of various countries.

One of 12 suspects arrested in London during the past week, Abu Eisa Al Hindi, was named in the recent US report on the September 11 attacks on New York and Washington as having given a senior al-Qaeda operative in South East Asia, Riduyan Ismuddin, the names of people in South Africa and California who could be called on for help if he had to go to ground.

Al Hindi was arrested in North London last week. He has been identified as "Bilal", the man with who the Pakistani cell was communicating on plans to stage a terror attack at Heathrow Airport.

Further evidence of al-Qaeda's growing presence in Africa lies in a dossier prepared by UN prosecutors at the special war crimes court in Sierra Leone, which has indicted Liberian strongman Taylor in absentia.

They claim that from September 1998 to late 2002 or early 2003, six of the FBI's "most wanted", including Ghailani, amassed an estimated \$15 million from trade in diamonds to finance terror operations.

UN investigators said al-Qaeda paid Taylor for protection and lived under his shield for more than five years, at a military camp near the border with Sierra Leone, in government-run hotels in the capital of Monrovia and at one of Taylor's residences in Congo Town.

One of the al-Qaeda men served for a time as a driver for one of Taylor's senior military commanders, General Sam Bockarie. Others met frequently with another Taylor ally, General Issa Sesay.

The report says Dr Siddiqui, who qualified as a microbiologist in America, was in Liberia from June 2001 as the guest of one of Taylor's top lieutenants and acted as liaison between the Al Qaeda gem traders and her superiors in Pakistan.

The FBI issued a global warrant for Siddiqui's arrest in March last year. She is believed to be one of the al-Qaeda operatives who have the expertise to manufacture a chemical, biological or "dirty" nuclear bomb.

Mohammed Ariff, a South African man arrested by Mexican authorities last week for having "strange and puzzling" travel documents and questioned by the FBI, was released on Friday.

Foreign Affairs spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa confirmed that Ariff was a South African citizen, but declined to comment further. South African diplomats are still trying to gain consular access to the two men who were arrested in Pakistan more than a week ago, and to the woman detained in Texas.

Taylor, on asylum in Nigeria since he was persuaded to quit power by African leaders, is wanted by the UN backed war crimes tribunal in Sierra Leone.

The Nigerian government has repeatedly said that Taylor would only be extradited on the request of an elected government in Liberia.

---

[Back](#)

---

[Who Are We ?](#) | [About THISDAYOnline.com](#) | [THISDAY People](#) | [Contact Us](#)

© Copyright 2000 Leaders & Company Limited

---



CCA is your bridge to the latest  
business opportunities in Africa.

## Taylor Wanted for Terrorism

**The Analyst** (Monrovia)

NEWS

August 9, 2004

Posted to the web August 9, 2004

A recent legal wrangling in which the government of Nigeria again strongly opposed the extradition of former Liberian president, Charles G. Taylor, to Sierra Leone to face charges for atrocities allegedly committed against the people of that country may have led many to the conclusion that the issue had hit dead end. But when it is considered that the Government of the United States of America and a recent United Nations report have adduced fresh evidence of Mr. Taylor's support and coordination of the activities of the terrorist movement of world class' notorious Osama bin Laden, then there are thin doubts that Taylor's luck has run out and it is only a matter of time before he is flown out of Nigeria to face his checkered past. The Analyst's Staff Writer has been looking at the new evidence and the implications.

Mr. Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, a senior Al Qaeda operative who was captured in Pakistan last week, reports say, has divulged that he met with Mr. Taylor in the years before and after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on New York and Washington, respectively, a Nigerian publication, NIGERIA TODAY ONLINE, reported August 5.

The senior Al Qaeda operative was arrested on July 25, 2004 in eastern Pakistan, along with more than a dozen other Al Qaeda operatives and is being held in connection with the 1988 bombing of two U.S. embassies in Africa, the reports say.

The publication quoted U.S. intelligence officials and United Nations investigators as saying that Ghailani received refuge from the former U.S. ally (Taylor) while planning further terrorist operations.

It said the officials and investigators also painted a picture of Liberia under Taylor as a "haven for Al Qaeda," thereby raising fresh queries about why the United States waited so long to support Taylor's removal and continuous refrain from using its influence to bring him before the UN war crimes tribunal in Sierra Leone.

For at least three years beginning the late 1990s, the publication quoted US intelligence sources and the UN report as saying, Ghailani lived in an army camp and hotels run by Taylor's government in Liberia.

"In addition, Taylor's forces harbored other suspected Al Qaeda leaders, including the MIT-educated biologist Aafia Siddiqui," U.S. officials and UN investigators said.

Say UN war crimes documents released recently: "Al Qaeda allegedly paid Taylor for protection and then joined him in the African diamond trade, raising millions of dollars for terrorist activities." Taylor, who was deposed last year, is living in exile in Nigeria under a deal brokered by the United States.

The U.S. government has been under increasing pressure to help persuade Nigeria to turn Taylor over to the UN tribunal in Sierra Leone, which has indicted him in connection with atrocities in various West African

nations.

"But the United States, which officials have said used Taylor as a CIA informant and backed his Revolutionary United Front in the mid-1990s, has so far refused," the publication noted.

A new confidential report by the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone which was written by UN investigators preparing the case against Taylor revealed: "It is clear the Al Qaeda had been in West Africa since September 1998 and maintained a continuous presence in the area through 2002." Based on the strength of the evidence adduced by the new report, according to the publication that runs a daily briefing on key political and economic events affecting Nigeria, the US government has been in close consultation with the Nigerian government to consider the possibility of repatriating Mr. Taylor. It however, did not say where.

"Let it be known that we (US) and the Nigerian government are in serious dialogue on when and how Taylor will be released to face the UN court," the new US Consul-General in Nigeria, Brian Browne, was quoted as divulging when he briefed newsman in Lagos recently.

Quoting Secretary of State Colin Powell on the Taylor issue, Browne said, "the US believes that there should be certain circumstances that should arise to bring Taylor to justice." And that circumstance may have just presented itself in Taylor's alleged links with terrorists, causing one US official to describe Taylor as a "fugitive and not someone Nigeria granted asylum." A US official who preferred anonymity further disclosed that the U.S. Defense Department approved a Special Forces raid to capture Al Qaeda leaders under Taylor's protection in 2001, but called it off and never reactivated the plan.

He did not elaborate, but indicated that senior leaders of Al Qaeda continued to receive Taylor's protection until last year when Taylor fell from grace and sought refuge in Nigeria.

Neither the United States nor Nigeria has commented on Liberia's alleged Al Qaeda links under Taylor.

Nevertheless, the UN investigation also found that Ghailani, who was sent to Liberia in 1999 to help coordinate Al Qaeda investments in the diamond trade, met with Taylor along with three Al Qaeda leaders, Fazul Abdullah Mohammed, Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah, and Sheik Ahmed Salim Swedan.

All three are wanted in the 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and remain on the FBI's list of 22 most wanted terrorists.

"Ghailani and Mohammed arrived in Liberia in March 1999 from the Ivory Coast," according to the UN war crimes investigator's report, "and traveled to Monrovia as guests of Taylor and met with the Liberian dictator at his Congo Town residence. Both men remained in Liberia for several years, staying at a military camp near the border with Sierra Leone and in government-run hotels in Monrovia." The UN investigators outlined a series of alleged links between Al Qaeda leaders and Taylor's regime.

The publication revealed further: "Mohammed served as a driver in 2000 for General Sam Bockarie, a senior Taylor commander. Al Qaeda's then-military commander, Mohammed Atef, met in early 2000 with General Issa Sesay, another Taylor commander. Atef is believed to have been killed in the U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Siddiqui, the MIT-trained microbiologist who is also on the FBI's most-wanted list, arrived in Monrovia in June 2001 as a guest of one of Taylor's top lieutenants." The UN investigators' reports noted that she traveled to Monrovia for a week to meet with Al Qaeda operatives to get a status report for her superiors in Pakistan on the terror group's diamonds and gem trade.

"The men told their families in letters recovered by the police that they intended to blow themselves up in attacks on unspecified targets," said Ansyad Mbai, the top anti-terror official at the Pakistani Security Ministry. I Didn't Plot Against Chairman Bryant -Speaker Dweh Denies; Says CPA Is Irreversible "I never staged any coup d'etat against Chairman Bryant or do I have any intention to stage a coup d'etat against him," said NTLA Speaker Dweh in reaction to allegation levied against him by Gen. Oforie Diah,

Mensiegar Karnga reports.

Gen. Diah, a LURD's high ranking military officer recently alleged that Speaker Dweh and other executives of the movement asked him to stage a coup to oust Chairman Charles Gyude Bryant. His allegation prompted public outcries and accusations against the Speaker Dweh. More importantly, the NTLA has constituted a committee to look into the allegation.

Addressing scores of legislative reporters at the Capitol Building, Speaker Dweh said that at no time did he and General Diah along with others plan to dethrone the NTGL government.

Said he: "I am not a coup plotter." "Why will I want to overthrow the government at this time when every Liberian is preaching peace as basis for growth and development," he opined, "Oforie Diah is a liar." He calls on General Diah and others to formulate programs that will free the Liberian people from bondage, and not lies that will create panic and make "our people defused." House Speaker Dweh indicated that the CPA is irreversible and every Liberian as well as actors of the CPA must make sure that peace takes its fundamental roots in the country.

He further said that there is no time for any Liberian to think about war, noting "for the past 14 years, we fought and killed each other for no reason. We have learnt our lessons the hard way. It is now time that we say goodbye to war and welcome peace as a new friend." What Liberians need to do to forge ahead should matter instead of ousting the government. As such, he noted that Liberians should bury the bitter past regardless of "our differences and place national interest above personal interest and preach reconciliation as the best way forward." The NTLA Speaker said he has no intention to once again be part of any group that will hold "our people hostage for selfish reasons, let alone to dethrone Chairman Bryant." According to him, he is one of the architects of the Bryant-led transitional government, therefore it would be naïve were he to be of any plan to supplant the government.

"It is now time for warmongers to see reasons and send words of caution to their commanders and soldiers to make the DDRR a success," he noted.

He said the present confusions were hindering the positive progress of the country thereby creating fears for people of goodwill to invest in our society.


Touching on the leadership crisis within LURD, Speaker Dweh called on the movement not to create an avenue that will subject "our people to hardship and other forms of economic degradation." The speaker said factional loyalty should be a thing of the past as we are thinking about reunifying the people after its brutal civil conflict.

---

Copyright © 2004 The Analyst. All rights reserved. Distributed by  
AllAfrica Global Media (allAfrica.com).

---



 Print this article

Close This Window

## Qaeda Bought West African Gems Before 9/11 - Report

Mon Aug 9, 2004 05:41 PM ET

By Nick Tattersall

DAKAR (Reuters) - Top al Qaeda operatives bought diamonds in West Africa ahead of the Sept. 11 attacks on the United States, dealing directly with Liberia's then-president Charles Taylor, a report by U.N.-backed prosecutors showed.

The document, prepared by prosecutors at Sierra Leone's special war crimes court, also said the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) had confirmed al Qaeda's presence in Liberia after its own visit to the country in February 2004.

Six senior al Qaeda figures arranged diamond deals in hotels and safe houses in Liberia's capital Monrovia from late 1998 onwards, according to witnesses cited in the document, seen by Reuters on Monday.

"It is clear that al Qaeda had been in West Africa since September 1998 and maintained a continuous presence in the area through 2002," the report by prosecutors at Sierra Leone's special war crimes tribunal said.

It also said recent reports indicated al Qaeda was "very active" in the rebel-held north of Ivory Coast.

David Crane, chief prosecutor at the Freetown court, has long said investigations into atrocities committed during Sierra Leone's civil war had turned up links between al Qaeda and diamond smuggling in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Ivory Coast.

A source close to the prosecution said the leaked document, which was undated, appeared to be a watered down version of the court's submission to the Sept. 11 commission, the panel that investigated the suicide airline attacks.

The commission concluded in its final report last month that it had seen "no persuasive evidence that al Qaeda funded itself by trading in African conflict diamonds." Diplomats in the region have also said there is little concrete evidence.

### FBI HAS EVIDENCE

However the document compiled by the court said FBI investigators had concluded there was an al Qaeda presence after a visit to Liberia in February 2004.

"The FBI contacted us and advised that their investigation in Liberia had confirmed the presence of al Qaeda and those findings would be reported to FBI headquarters," it said.

Al Qaeda members apparently seen in Liberia by witnesses cited in the court document include Tanzanian Ahmed Khalfan Ghailani, seized in Pakistan last month and wanted in connection with the 1998 bombings of two U.S. embassies in East Africa.

Others on the FBI's "Most Wanted Terrorist List" seen by witnesses in Liberia included Mohammed Atef, also known as Abu Hafs, an aide to al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

Fazul Abdullah Mohammed and Sheikh Ahmed Salim Swedan, also wanted for the 1998 bombings, had been seen trying to strike diamond deals in Monrovia, as had Abdullah Ahmed Abdullah and Aafia Siddiqui, believed to be an al Qaeda operative and facilitator.

Sierra Leone's court has indicted Taylor, believed to be behind a web of diamond-fueled conflicts in the region, for war

crimes and has pushed for his extradition from Nigeria, where he fled last August under U.S. pressure.

The court's critics say its failure to put on trial its top living suspect undermines its authority. (Additional reporting by David Lewis in Kinshasa)

---

© Copyright Reuters 2004. All rights reserved. Any copying, re-publication or re-distribution of Reuters content or of any content used on this site, including by framing or similar means, is expressly prohibited without prior written consent of Reuters.

Quotes and other data are provided for your personal information only, and are not intended for trading purposes. Reuters, the members of its Group and its data providers shall not be liable for any errors or delays in the quotes or other data, or for any actions taken in reliance thereon.

© Reuters 2004. All rights reserved. Republication or redistribution of Reuters content, including by caching, framing or similar means, is expressly prohibited without the prior written consent of Reuters. Reuters and the Reuters sphere logo are registered trademarks and trademarks of the Reuters group of companies around the world.

**Close This Window**



## Guest writer

By Lumsana Gberie

There is a professional assessment in Howard French's excellent book, *A Continent for the Taking: the Tragedy and Hope of Africa* (2004) that, in its intensity and suspense, has the quality to stay forever in one's mind.

French, a former New York Times West African Bureau chief, encounters the murderous Liberian warlord Charles Taylor in Monrovia. Amidst the general distress, Taylor, "impeccably coiffed, manicured and groomed," is "dressed in a finely tailored two-piece African-style suit," and exuded of "haughty self-contentment." He is seated "in a high-backed rattan chair reminiscent of the one of the famous pictures of Black Panther leader Huey Newton," and he is holding, for good measure, "an elaborately carved wooden scepter."

It is a triumphant Taylor-this is after the 1996 Abuja Accord which would finally pave his way to becoming President of Liberia--and, for all intents and purposes, the warlord must look presidential. Taylor is holding a press conference, and French takes his chance: "Isn't it outrageous," he asks Taylor, who had just described his predatory insurgency as 'God's war'.

"Isn't it outrageous for someone who has drugged small boys, given them arms and trained them to kill to call this God's war?"

How dare you call the destruction of your country in this manner and the killing of two hundred thousand people God's war?" Ever wily and articulate,

Taylor did not miss a beat. "I just believe in the destiny of man being controlled by God, and wars, whether man-made or what, are directed by a force," he said.

"And so when I say it is God's war, God has his own way of restoring the land, and he will restore it after the war."

This statement was made in 1996. A year later, after rigged elections, Taylor became President. Seven years later, however, God has still not restored much in Liberia.

A visitor to the country is immediately struck by its decrepitude. The Roberts International Airport is a ramshackle outfit looking very much like a makeshift trading outpost. One of its terminal buildings was burnt down during the early phases of the war, in early 1990, and has not been rebuilt.

And developments that should be hopeful are marred by the country's unique complications.

A large UN force, 15,000 strong, has now been deployed throughout the country, and is desperately trying to disarm the demented combatants who ravaged the country for over a decade.

The disarmament should have been easy: many of the Liberian militias have gone through such a process before, some of them twice (ahead of the 1997 elections, and during Sierra Leone disarmament process, in which some of current Liberian fighters were active). But nearly a year after the UN mission in the

# Liberia: Peace at last?

country, UNMIL, deployed, officials still do not have an accurate estimate of combatants to be disarmed. Before the start of disarmament in December last year, UNMIL had a 'working figure' of 38,000 combatants to be disarmed. The first attempted

killed in the ensuing violence. In the event, the UN paid 12,000 soldiers but received only 8,000 weapons.

Disarmament restarted in April this year, with the setting up of 4 cantonment sites where the various militias would hand in weapons.

At that point, the UN estimated that 45,000 combatants would be disarmed. By mid-July, however, the UN had already taken weapons from 54,000, and there were more turning up each day. A UN official I spoke to in Monrovia in July calmly explained how, after a 2-hour long meeting with "48 Generals", he was still unable to tell how many militias remained to be disarmed. Forty-eight Generals? 'Yes, they are rebel generals, bush generals, and they are jealous of their ranks!'

He was not facetious, this bright, diligent bureaucrat; he was deadpan. And that, in a way, sums up the pathos of the Liberian situation: the corrosive audacity of its militias, the sense of entitlement, of a people steeped into neurosis.

At the start of the disarmament in April, I traveled with one of the UN teams to Gbarnga, once the headquarters of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) militias. Formerly a fairly prosperous town, with abandoned gas stations and bullet-riddled villas to show for it, Gbarnga is now, after years of fighting, a sullen outpost, its residents sucked into a brooding, almost hermetic

mode.

A very long line of militias had already been formed by 10:00 am, waiting at the cantonment site to hand in old AK 47 rifles and collect their money. At first glance, there was nothing in their stupefying, red-eyed vacancies to indicate the vicious murderers they have been. Things were proceeding smoothly until, suddenly, a scrawny militia with bandana around the head jumped ahead of the queue, raised his old rifle and started shouting abuses at the UN officers. 'Jacques Klein is a mother-fucker, you are all s...! Give us our money now or we'll go to Sierra Leone, to Guinea, to Ivory Coast, and start fighting all over again. We'll go...'

Liberia is obviously a highly traumatized country, but outbursts like this still have the capacity to unsettle. Founded by ex-American slaves in the nineteenth century, and misused as a client state by successive US governments during the Cold War---only to brutally abandon it when the awful dictatorship they had been bankrolling imploded with disastrous humanitarian consequences---Liberia confronts the international community with undaunted challenges.

The country's politics has always found expression either in brutal hysteria or bathos; anything that can go wrong will go wrong.

Fortunately, the UN mission in the country appears to be finally gaining traction. It began on a false footing

TO BE CONTINUED

Concord Times

Tuesday August 10, 2004