

**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:**

Friday, December 17, 2004

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
If you are aware of omissions or have any comments or suggestions please contact  
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## UN 'sacks' accuser in Halloran sex abuse case

By Martin Daly

December 17, 2004

The former Tasmanian detective who instigated the child sex abuse charges against Victorian detective Peter Halloran has been effectively fired from her United Nations job for allegedly talking to the media about the case.

Mandy Cordwell, 37, who told her superiors a 13-year-old schoolgirl had claimed Halloran had sex with her several times, was suspended on Tuesday for four months without pay.

Ms Cordwell was already under suspension, with pay, for allegedly talking to the media and, reportedly, for making allegations against senior UN officials in Sierra Leone.

Friends last night described Ms Cordwell's suspension as brutal and said she was upset but not surprised.

Ms Cordwell, an 18-year police veteran and a respected officer who served more than three years on a peacekeeping mission in East Timor, was reported to be preparing to return to Australia next week from Sierra Leone.

She worked with Halloran as a war crimes investigator with the UN-established Special Court of Sierra Leone, and shared a house with him and two other police officers.

But Ms Cordwell incurred the anger of the Special Court when she became involved in the investigation after the girl told her Halloran had sex with her.

Ms Cordwell brought the girl to a local police officer who took a statement in which the girl gave graphic details of the alleged sex with Halloran. The girl later changed her story and said Ms Cordwell has pressured her and had offered inducements to make up the stories.

But in other statements to the Special Court, the local police and her older sister, the girl gave varying descriptions of the alleged sex abuse, before eventually saying in court that nothing had happened at all.

Ms Cordwell was castigated by a Special Court inquiry for being unprofessional, for being involved in a process that denied Halloran natural justice and for putting words into the alleged victim's mouth.

Halloran, who is facing three charges relating to sex with a minor in Sierra Leone's High Court, denies the charges.

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2002 National Achievement Award Winner

# INDEPENDENT OBSERVER

Published Daily Since 9th August 1997

Friday 17th December, 2004.

Peace & Democracy are two sides of the same coin L5

# Sankoh's Nephew Flies In To Register New Party

Aimamy Bakarr Sankoh, nephew of late RUF leader Foday Saybana Sankoh, breezed into our office recently to report that he was in Freetown from Ghana, to register his Sierra Leone People's Democratic League as a political party.

He said he had met with officials of the National Electoral Commission (NEC) and has been given the guidelines as how to go about to register a political party. But the process, he said, will commence some next year.

When it was put to him

new political parties have not been able to make any headway in the political arena, with reference to past Presidential and General elections, Bakarr Sankoh said it is their determination to change that belief in the minds of the

people through massive sensitization.

When it was further put to

him that in Sierra Leone today, it is either you belong to the SLPP or APC, he re-

sponded by saying "that is going to be a thing of the past".

Sunday Tribune  
The Independent  
on Saturday  
The Mercury  
The Star

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**Sierra Leone is on the right path - Annan**

December 16 2004 at 01:14PM

**AFP**

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New York - Sierra Leone has made progress over the past year in controlling its diamond trade and in stabilising the country in the months since United Nations forces left, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan said on Wednesday.

Sierra Leone comes in 177th on a UN Development Programme list of countries ranked by standard of living.

Government revenues have risen as it struggles against trafficking, Annan said in a report to the UN Security Council released on Wednesday.

From January until October, diamond export receipts reached \$120-million (about R700-million), up from \$71-million for the same period in 2003, reflecting the control Freetown has imposed on the trade, the report said.

**'This achievement constitutes one of the key outcomes'**

Progress was largely attributable to authorities' adherence to the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme, the report said.

"This achievement constitutes one of the key outcomes of the consolidation of state authority across the country,"

Annan said in the report.

Smuggling of diamonds, among other things, has funded a 10-year civil war, which has killed at least 200 000 persons and mutilated tens of thousands more, before ending in January 2002.

However, Annan said, many sources of social tension exist in Sierra Leone, such as youth unemployment.


Events in Ivory Coast have triggered an influx of refugees to Sierra Leone, with a "ripple effect" across the countries of the region, especially Liberia and Sierra Leone, two countries poorly equipped for such an emergency, the report said.


"It is obvious that, if the crisis in Cote d'Ivoire persists, the stability of the whole sub-region, including Sierra Leone, could be seriously jeopardised," Annan said.

The UN Mission in Sierra Leone (Minusil), of 17 500 troops, was reduced to 5 527 in November. The Security Council renewed its mandate until the end of June, but its force will be reduced to 3 250 by the first half of 2005.

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## UN Security Council threatens Côte d'Ivoire further over ignored peace pledges

16 December 2004 – The United Nations Security Council today said it was looking for ways to toughen the arms embargo against Côte d'Ivoire and deplored the failure of all parties to fulfill their pledges under peace agreements by yesterday, a deadline set to herald expanded and automatic sanctions for a year.

On the month-old arms embargo, “the Security Council expresses its intention to consider without delay further steps to ensure the effective monitoring and implementation of the arms embargo imposed by Resolution 1572 (2004),” according to a statement read by Algeria's Permanent Representative, Ambassador Abdullah Baali, this month's Council President.

On the question of the broader sanctions to be imposed if the parties failed to start the peace process, Mr. Baali said the body “deplore(d) the fact that the signatories of the Linas-Marcoussis and Accra III agreements have not implemented by 15 December 2004 all their commitments under the Accra II agreement.”

The Accra III Agreement, adopted at a West African summit in late July in the Ghanaian capital, binds the Ivorian parties once more to the 2003 Linas-Marcoussis accord which ended bitter fighting between factions and briefly bought into being a Government of national reconciliation

If any Ivoirian party failed to respect the commitments made last week to the African Union (AU) representative, South African President Mbeki, thereby threatening the implementation of the two agreements, however, then the Council “recalls in this regard the measures referred to in paragraphs 9 and 11 of Resolution 1572 (2004).”

The two paragraphs impose the arms embargo and threaten travel bans and the freezing of assets, but sources said the designated “Committee of the Security Council consisting of all the members of the Council” did not yet have the requisite list of the Côte d'Ivoire nationals “who constitute a threat to the peace and national reconciliation process.”

In the statement, the Algerian Permanent Representative said the Council “demands that all Ivorian parties stop all incitement to violence and hatred in broadcast, written and other media” and “that all Ivorian parties ensure freedom of the press and unlimited access to information throughout the country.”

The Council also expressed its appreciation to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Albert Tévoédjrè, a 75-year-old former senior minister and professor from Benin, who resigned from the job last week, “for his unsparing efforts to support the restoration of a durable peace in Côte d'Ivoire under challenging circumstances.”



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## **Saddam holds first meeting with a defense attorney, as his former lieutenants prepare for court**

By Sameer N. Yacoub, Associated Press, 12/16/2004 20:03

BAGHDAD, Iraq (AP) Saddam Hussein met with a defense lawyer Thursday for the first time since his capture a year ago, days before several of his top aides are due to appear in court for hearings on alleged war crimes.

The unidentified attorney spent four hours with the 67-year-old former dictator at Saddam's undisclosed detention site, said his chief lawyer, Ziad al-Khasawneh.

"He was in good health and his morale was high and very strong," al-Khasawneh said. "He looked much better than his earlier public appearance when he was arraigned a few months ago."

The Iraqi interim government's push to get the trials for Saddam's former lieutenants under way before the Jan. 30 national elections has led to dissent even within the Iraqi Cabinet.

"Trials as symbolic as those against the dignitaries of the former regime should only start after the establishment of an Iraqi government with ballot-box legitimacy," Iraqi Justice Minister Malik Dohan al-Hassan told the Geneva daily newspaper *Le Temps* in an interview published Thursday.

Interim Prime Minister Ayad Allawi said Tuesday that procedures could begin as early as next week before the Iraqi Special Tribunal.

Saddam will not be among the first to appear in court. But his notorious former right-hand man, Ali Hassan al-Majid the ex-general known as "Chemical Ali" for his use of chemical weapons is expected to appear along with 11 other former regime members at the initial investigative court hearing next week.

"The cases against his (Saddam's) henchmen are probably less complicated to prove than the cases against him," Stephen Orlofsky, a former federal judge who toured Iraq to assess its judiciary, told CNN.

"There are probably fewer crimes and the evidence may be stronger and I'm sure the prosecution is hopeful that one or more of them will ultimately cooperate and testify against Saddam," Orlofsky said.

He said Saddam will face a special tribunal of five judges that was created to try war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

In Baghdad, a U.S. military official familiar with the case confirmed Saddam was

visited by a lawyer for the first time since being hauled from his "spider hole" on a farm near his hometown of Tikrit on Dec. 13, 2003.

With six weeks of campaigning under way ahead of the crucial vote for a 275-member assembly, interim President Ghazi al-Yawer predicted regional and international interests will spend millions of dollars to influence the balloting a statement aimed primarily at Iran and Syria.

"There are many parties, regional and international, who want to serve their own interests and they want to have friends in power in Iraq," al-Yawer said. "We think that millions of dollars will be spent on the elections process from outside the country. We hope that this will not happen and that the money and the decisions will be Iraqi."

Al-Yawer's comments came a day after Defense Minister Hazem Shaalan accused Iran and Syria of supporting terrorism in Iraq.

Shaalan said Tehran and Damascus backed former Saddam security operatives and Iraq's top terror figure, Jordanian militant Abu Musab al-Zarqawi. The remarks seemed timed to coincide with announcements by Allawi and al-Yawer both seen as strongly opposed to Iranian influence in Iraqi affairs to run in the elections.

Officials in Baghdad and Washington have long accused Iran and Syria of letting militants cross into Iraq to fight U.S.-led forces. Tehran and Damascus deny it.

Many expect Iraq's raging insurgency to dog the campaign and the election itself, potentially scaring voters from polling stations, a result that would boost claims by opponents of the U.S.-backed government that the polls are illegitimate.

A U.S. Marine was "killed in action" Thursday while conducting security and stabilization operations in the volatile Anbar province west of Baghdad, the military said. More details were not released and the Marine's identity was withheld pending notification of relatives.

Insurgents killed 10 other people Thursday including a government official gunned down in the capital and three refugees slain by a rocket attack in northern Iraq.

Unidentified gunmen shot and killed Qassim Mehawi, deputy head of the Communications Ministry, as he went to work in Baghdad, and eight of his bodyguards were injured.

A roadside bomb in western Baghdad damaged an SUV, then gunmen opened fire, killing a foreigner and wounding two others. Their nationalities were not released.

Three Iraqi National Guardsmen died and six others were injured when another roadside bomb blast in western Baghdad targeted their truck.

In Kirkuk, northern Iraq, a rocket slammed into a Kurdish refugee housing compound, killing three refugees and wounding one, police Brig. Gen. Sarhad Qader said.

Two Kurdish brothers were shot to death in their shop in the predominantly Sunni Arab town of Hawija, 28 miles southwest of Kirkuk. Qader said the killers wrote

graffiti on the shop walls saying, "No Kurds in Hawija."

In Ramadi, west of Baghdad, militants told journalists they shot and killed an Italian citizen after he tried to break through a guerrilla roadblock on a highway, purportedly killing one gunman in the process.

An Italian passport and Lebanese residency permit the gunmen displayed identified the man as Salvatore Santoro. A document from the Italian Embassy in Beirut seeking an Iraqi visa for the man called him an aid worker helping Iraqi children.

The journalists provided text, photos and video to The Associated Press showing militants standing next to a banner identifying them as members of the Islamic Movement of Iraqi Mujahedeen. One told the journalists the slaying was "a present to Berlusconi's stupidity" referring to Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi, a close U.S. ally who sent troops to Iraq. Berlusconi said he was waiting for news on reports an Italian had been killed.





## Saddam Sees Lawyer, Forces Deployed to Kerbala

*Reuters*

**Dec. 16, 2004** - Saddam Hussein saw a lawyer hired by his family on Thursday, his first contact with defense counsel since U.S. soldiers captured him a year ago.

Iraq's government is preparing to begin war crimes hearings for some of his aides next week, during campaigning for the first free election since Saddam came to power three decades ago. Some of his lieutenants have also seen lawyers this week.

One or two others may join Saddam's cousin Ali Hassan al-Majid -- "Chemical Ali" -- at the first investigative hearings next week, diplomats working with the government said.

At least 107 parties, blocs and individuals have registered candidacies for the Jan. 30 ballot, the Electoral Commission said, promising to publish lists and ballot papers within days.

U.S. occupying forces say they can largely secure the poll from attacks from rebels drawn mostly from Saddam's Sunni Arab minority, which stands to lose out to majority Shi'ite Muslims.

A leading Sunni party, which is pressing for the vote to be delayed because of violence in the Sunni north and west, called on Iraqis not to be tempted into sectarian war after a bombing in a Shi'ite holy city on Thursday's first day of campaigning.

Police reinforcements and National Guards were deployed to Kerbala, a day after the blast, which killed 10 and wounded more than 30. Those included a senior cleric close to Ayatollah Ali al-Sistani, spiritual leader for most Iraqi Shi'ites, who has told them it is their duty to back the main Shi'ite-led bloc.

The biggest Sunni party, the Iraqi Islamic Party, condemned what it called all acts of terror and sabotage.

Kerbala-based Ayatollah Mohammed Taqi al-Muddaresi, another close Sistani ally, said the assassination attempt on Sheikh Abdul-Mehdi al-Karbalai was intended to undermine the poll.

"This attack is part of a series of terrorist acts attempting to sow discord among the Iraqi people and obstruct the electoral process," he said in a statement.

### SADDAM SEES LAWYER

After spending four hours with him, Saddam's lawyers said he appeared in better health compared to his last appearance before the court.

Dragged bewildered and dishevelled from a hole in the ground on Dec. 13 last year, the former leader last appeared, to hear the nature of charges against him in July, as did 11 aides.

Another Iraqi lawyer on the team said one of its 20 members had also visited Saddam's jailed secretary, Abid Hamid Mahmud al-Tikriti. A third lawyer visited his defense minister Sultan Hashim Ahmed and former deputy prime minister Tareq Aziz was due to meet his defense counsel in the coming days.

Defense Minister Hazim al-Shaalan has said Majid would see the judge first. He is known as "Chemical Ali" for his alleged use of poison gas against Kurds in the late 1980s.

Western diplomats stress the hearings are preliminary and not a full-scale commencement of war crimes trials. Some Iraqi officials see the timing as part of Allawi's election campaign.

#### CARTER PESSIMISTIC

Though Kerbala and the neighboring Shi'ite holy city of Najaf have seen their share of violence since the U.S. invasion, bloodshed is greatest in Sunni areas further north, including Baghdad. Officials and security forces are prime targets.

Gunmen killed the senior Communications Ministry official who had led efforts to restore the country's war-ravaged telephone network after spending nearly two decades in jail under Saddam. Kassim Imhawi was driving to work when the gunmen drove alongside and opened fire on his car.

There was a further daily round of killings elsewhere, including the reported death of an Italian kidnap victim.

People in Kerbala said bombs would not stop them voting.

"Terrorist acts in Kerbala and other cities will only make us ... more determined to vote," said taxi driver Ali Hammadi.

But former U.S. President Jimmy Carter, who has made a career of monitoring elections around the world, added his voice to those who believe the violence makes an election meaningless.

"I don't see how all the rudimentary requirements for a free and safe election can be achieved in another month. How can anyone campaign? How can anyone go and vote without fear?," he told Reuters. "There is not enough security there in my opinion to have a legitimate election. I hope I am wrong."

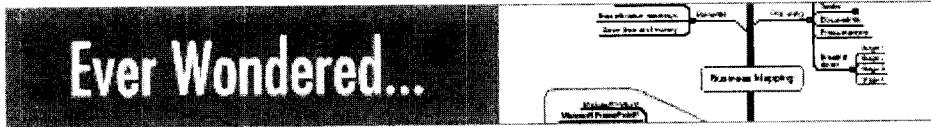
Syria joined Iran in dismissing charges by Allawi's allies that Iraq's neighbors are helping the insurgents.

President Bush warned Syria and Iran on Wednesday not to meddle after Defense Minister Shaalan said both secular Syria and Shi'ite Tehran were jointly helping Sunni Islamist al Qaeda ally, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, and former Saddam intelligence agents to undermine the new Iraqi order.

(Additional reporting by Sami Jumaili in Kerbala and Khaled Yacoub Oweis, Luke Baker and Lin Noueihed in Baghdad)

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# The Washington Times

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## Saddam aide gets Vatican legal help

By Colin Freeman

LONDON SUNDAY TELEGRAPH

Published December 17, 2004

LONDON -- Saddam Hussein's former foreign minister and right-hand man, Tariq Aziz, has persuaded sympathizers in the Vatican to arrange free legal advice for his defense against war crimes.

Mr. Aziz, a practicing Christian who acted as foreign spokesman for the Iraqi dictator, secured the services of Italian lawyers after contacting a group of Roman Catholic priests and bishops.

He wrote to his family from jail in Baghdad, urging them to contact the Rev. Jean-Marie Benjamin, a priest who previously had brokered a meeting between Mr. Aziz and Pope John Paul II before the war last year.

Father Benjamin, who has said he is acting with the Vatican's unofficial approval, is now orchestrating religious and legal support for Mr. Aziz.

The campaign also has the backing of Monsignor Emmanuel Delly, the patriarch of Baghdad and spiritual leader of the country's 500,000 Chaldean Christians, including Mr. Aziz.

Supporters of Mr. Aziz say he was only a diplomat, but British and American officials say his role as apologist for Saddam's regime makes him culpable.

Father Benjamin, 58, is a former executive of UNICEF, which campaigned against sanctions on Iraq. "Mr. Aziz was a friend of mine and was a diplomat, not a military man," he said.

Father Benjamin said Mr. Aziz's family contacted him last July for help with the defense. "When I talked with my bishops and superiors they said 'yes, morally you have the right to do so.'"

He said the lawyers will work for free because the Aziz family lacks the funds.

The Vatican, which declined to comment on the matter, encourages priests to carry out unofficial initiatives as a way of tackling sensitive diplomatic issues.

Father Benjamin received a warm letter from Cardinal Angelo Sodano, the Vatican's secretary of state, thanking him for his work "building links with Iraqis and the wider Arab world."

The letter made no direct reference to the Aziz case but Father Benjamin said: "Privately, they support what we do."

Father Benjamin has assembled a team of five Italian lawyers and fellow clergymen, including a bishop, Diego Bona, the president of the Assisi-based Beato Angelico Foundation, which promotes Muslim-Christian relations.

It was as director of the foundation that Father Benjamin invited Mr. Aziz to meet the pope in February last year, prompting criticism that Rome was rolling out the red carpet for the Iraqi regime.