

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:

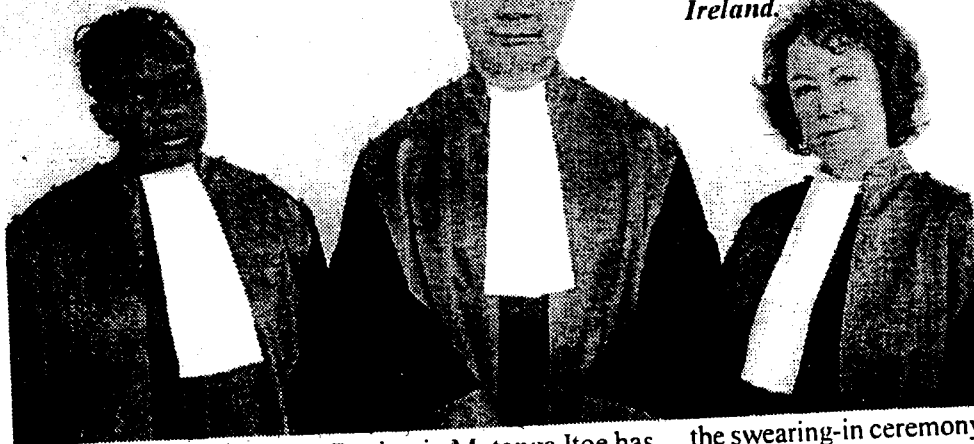
Tuesday, January 18, 2005

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

"We are committed to the rule of law"- Judge Itoe

Judge Julia Sebutinde from Uganda

Judge Richard Lussick from Samoa and Judge Teresa Doherty from Northern Ireland.



By Tamba Borbor
The Presiding Judge of the First Trial Chamber of the Special Court-

Benjamin Mutanga Itoe has stated that "we will and are committed to the rule of law." Speaking yesterday at

the swearing-in ceremony of Judges to the Second Trial Chamber of the Court, Judge Itoe went on to assure the UN Secretary General, the international community
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We are committed to the rule of law

From Front Page

and the Sierra Leonean community that they would dispense with justice without fear or favour, affection or ill-will. On the newly sworn-in Judges, he said, "the arrival of our colleagues has been a long-awaited event. We are happy that it has finally happened and I think the tribute goes to the principal actors who have made it possible for them to be here today," adding that

he heartily congratulates the newly sworn-in Judges on the oath they have just taken. "This oath marks a formal integration of three new Judges into the community of Special Court for Sierra Leone," while assuring them that since they arrived, they have been operating very harmoniously and in an atmosphere of peace and understanding- for which he paid particular tribute to the United Nations

and the Government of Sierra Leone for the security that exists. Judge Itoe further assured the international community and the Secretary General of the UN in particular that they would not spare any effort to live up to the mandate, which has been imposed on them including the constraints they would face. The three newly sworn-in Judges are: Judge Teresa Doherty from Northern Ireland; Judge Julia Sebutinde from Uganda and Judge Richard Lussick from Samoa.

Awoko

Tuesday January 18, 2005

Judges of Second Trial Chamber Sworn In

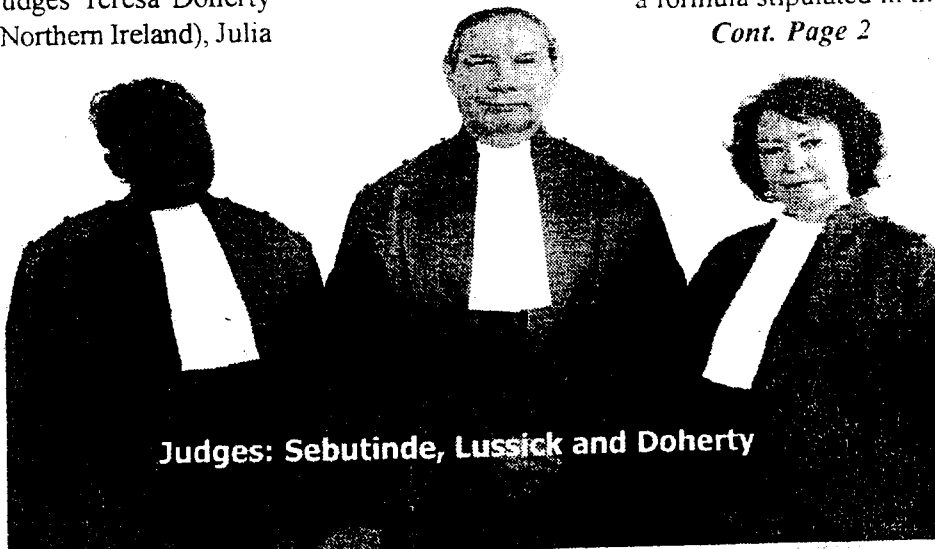
The three new Judges of the Special Court's long-awaited Second Trial Chamber were sworn in yesterday morning in a brief ceremony held at the Special Court's landmark courthouse in Freetown a press release stated.

Judges Teresa Doherty (Northern Ireland), Julia

Sebutinde (Uganda) and Richard Lussick (Samoa) solemnly undertook to serve "without fear or favour, affection or ill-will... honestly, faithfully, impartially and conscientiously" as Judges of the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The event was witnessed by Vice President Solomon Beréwa, and the Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General, Mr. Victor da Silva Angelo. Judge Lussick was appointed by the Sierra Leonean Government under a formula stipulated in the

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Judges: Sebutinde, Lussick and Doherty

Judges of Second Trial Chamber Sworn In

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Special Court Statute while the two others were appointed by the UN Secretary General.

Administering the oath, Registrar Robin Vincent, told them he was "enthusiastically happy to welcome you at long last" to the Special Court.

In his welcoming address, the Presiding Judge of the First Trial Chamber, Justice Benjamin Itoe told the new Judges "it is a very daunting task indeed to assume the

responsibility of trying those who are alleged to bear the greatest responsibility for what happened in this country."

"We feel that with your presence we would be able to fulfill the mandate which has been given to us by the international community to wrap up our activities," Judge Itoe said.

The Second Trial Chamber will begin hearing the case of the Prosecutor V. Alex Tamba Brima, Brima Bazzy

Kamara and Santigie Borbor Kanu. The three alleged former leaders of the AFRC are charged with 18 counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

The setting-up of the Second Trial Chamber also gives the Special Court options with regard to the envisaged trial of another accused, former Liberian President Charles Taylor.

Christian Mouton

Tuesday January 18, 2005

Second Trial Chamber judges sworn-in

Solomon Berewa, vice President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, and Mr. Victor da Silva Angelo, deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, who represented the United Nations.

Judges Doherty and Sebutinde were appointed by the United Nations Secretary-General, and

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The newly appointed Judges (L-R) Julia Sebutinde, Richard Lussick, Judges Teresa Doherty

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ministered the oath to the new Judges, told them he was "enthusiastically happy to welcome you at long last" to the Special Court.

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Standard Times

Tuesday January 18, 2005

Kofi Annan Assured Of Justice In Salone



By Joseph Turay

Following Monday's swearing in ceremony of the newly appointed judges of the Special

Court for Sierra Leone, the Presiding Judge of the Trial Chamber, Hon. Justice Benjamin Itoe, assured

the international community and the people of Sierra Leone of their commitment to the

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Kofi Annan Assured Of Justice In Salone

From front page

rule of law.

Justice Benjamin Itoe said they will dispense the rule of law without fear or favour and that at the end of the Special Court's mandate, they would have delivered justice to the expectations of Sierra

Leoneans and the international community.

He said the arrival of the new judges has been long overdue, adding that their arrival was a great relief to the court.

Justice Benjamin Itoe paid a special tribute to all those who contributed towards making the occasion a suc-

cess, particularly the United Nations Secretary General, Mr. Kofi Annan and the UN staff, whose efforts he described as unrelenting.

He also congratulated the new judges for having taken their new assignments and said the occasion signified their integration into the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The Exclusive

Tuesday January 18, 2005



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AFRICA
2005

Rights-Sierra Leone: War Crimes Court Opening Up Old Wounds

Inter Press Service (Johannesburg)

NEWS

January 17, 2005

Posted to the web January 17, 2005

By Lansana Fofana
Freetown

There has been growing anxiety in Sierra Leone about the commencement of the trials of three high-profile war crimes indictees from the former military junta, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which seized power in a coup in 1997.

The three, Tamba Alex Brima (alias Gullit), Santigie Kanu (aka Brigadier Five Five) and Ibrahim Bazy Kamara, have spent more than a year in the custody of the war crimes court, waiting for a trial chamber to be set up before their prosecution commences.

"The (special) court today (Monday) swears in three judges appointed by Secretary General Kofi Annan for a second trial chamber that will soon commence the trial of the three AFRC indictees," said Peter Anderson, a spokesperson for the court.

The chamber is also expected to try Charles Taylor, the former Liberian president who is currently living in Nigeria, as part of a deal to end Liberia's bloody civil war.

Taylor has been accused of supporting Sierra Leonean rebels who have committed terrible atrocities like the chopping of limbs and lips of civilians.

"The setting up of the second trial chamber will help expedite the trials and keep the court within its mandate. We also urge the Nigerian authorities to hand over Charles Taylor, who must face the court and answer to charges against him," remarked David Crane, the American-born prosecutor of the court.

The three AFRC indictees were battlefield commanders. They were among the 17 "renegade soldiers" from the national army that toppled the civilian government in May 1997. They are thought to have masterminded the Jan. 1999 invasion of the capital that resulted in the murder of thousands of civilians, rape and abductions, arson attacks on homes and looting of property.

Hundreds of civilians were mutilated with some having their arms, legs and other body parts chopped off.

There are high expectations about the trials of some of the country's most hated wartime commanders.

"I think their trials are long overdue," commented Marie Kamara, a housewife whose husband was murdered by junta forces during the 1999 invasion of the capital by rebel forces.

"The junta forces abducted my only daughter (about 16) and repeatedly gang-raped her. I want to see justice

done and the ring-leaders of this cruelty be brought to book," Kamara told IPS at the wreckage of her home at Kissy, east of the capital Freetown.

Another survival of the junta's brutality Elvis Dumbuya, a civil servant testified: "The junta forces beat all seven of us in the family home on allegation that we were collaborators of the ousted civilian government."

Dumbuya added: "What followed was a tale of horror. Our family home and car were burnt down, my wife raped and two children, both girls abducted and turned into sex slaves. I will never forgive those who committed those despicable acts."

Such is the anger boiling over in Sierra Leoneans who endured the bloody reign of terror of the military junta for nine months. And this is notwithstanding the blanket amnesty provision in the peace agreement for all combatants, as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which recommended national reconciliation and tolerance.

The special court, set up as an independent tribunal jointly by the United Nations and the government of Sierra Leone, effectively began functioning in 2002 with a mandate to end at the close of this year. But it seems that mandate will be extended because of the fairly slow pace of the trials and what now looks like a pattern of boycotts by most of the indictees.

The three AFRC indictees, soon expected to go on trial, face an 18-count indictment for war crimes, crimes against humanity and violations of international humanitarian law.

In addition to their group, there are three other indictees from the former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and three more from the pro-government militia known as the Civil Defence Force (CDF) or "Kamajors" also on trial.

The court has to date indicted 11 suspected war criminals. Nine are in custody, two dead (Foday Sankoh, the RUF leader and his erstwhile deputy General Sam "Mosquito" Bockarie) and two on the run: former junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma and former Liberian president Charles Taylor.

The special court is now faced with the problem of boycotts by indictees thereby slowing proceedings. For example, all three CDF indictees have for several weeks been boycotting court sittings on various legal and procedural matters. The most high profiled among them is the former national co-ordinator of the CDF Sam Hinga Norman, an ex-minister of defence. He alleges that the charges brought against him were carried out in a wrong procedural manner. Once he set off his boycott, the other CDF indictees followed suit.

Now, all three RUF indictees have joined the fray. They have been boycotting court hearings and the RUF interim leader Issa Sesay protested to the court last week what he described as "continued detention".

"The war ended without a winner or loser. We negotiated peace and the peace accord gave blanket (amnesty) to all ex-combatants and so I see no reason for (this) special court," Sesay argued. According to him, the special court was a deal between the Sierra Leonean government and the United Nations, excluding the RUF.

"We (RUF) were not a party to the court's setting. We are being treated unfairly," Sesay concluded.

Court officials admit anonymously that the pattern of boycotts may somehow affect proceedings.

"If all the indictees withhold their rights to appear before the court and refuse to co-operate with their counsels, as some of them are already doing, this will surely affect the trials making the whole process difficult," a court insider opined to IPS on condition of anonymity.

The special court's mandate is to bring to justice those who bear the greatest responsibility for atrocities

committed in Sierra Leone since Nov. 30, 1996, halfway into the war and the date when the first peace accord was signed in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, between the government and the rebels.

The court is unique in that it blends Sierra Leonean criminal law with international humanitarian law and its judges include both Sierra Leoneans and international judges.

There are though doubts about the efficacy of the court in ending the cycle of impunity in this impoverished country, the expressed objective of the UN-backed tribunal.

The court also subtly faces threats from groups like former CDF supporters and RUF hard core sympathisers. But court officials dismiss any claims of threats against its operation saying security is well in place to protect both court officials and indictees in custody.

Some analysts and commentators speculate the court might turn into another flashpoint of renewed hostilities.

Charlie Hughes of the non-governmental think tank Forum for Democratic Initiatives (FORDI) in an interview with IPS said: "Although there can be no justification for impunity, I think the special court is not the answer either. Sierra Leone's conflict was unique and the fact that it was settled through negotiations, it is my view that a court like the special court might not help with national reconciliation; rather it will open up old wounds."

There is though a desire among yet another group of war victims, the hundreds of amputees to see justice done, like 25-year old Jabati Mambu, a student whose left arm was chopped off by rebels using blunt machete.

"The indictees must all go through the trials. I believe that way impunity will be ended in this country," Mambu told IPS.

As outlined by the UN Security Council, the special court is a novel experiment in international criminal tribunals. It will thus remain an experiment until it achieves its task of punishing those believed to bear the greatest responsibility for war crimes committed in this country.

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Cop freed in sex abuse trial

From correspondents in Freetown
January 18, 2005

A SIERRA Leone court today acquitted an Australian police officer employed by the war crimes tribunal in the west African state charged with sexual assault of a minor.

Superintendent Peter Halloran, 56, was acquitted of the two main charges in the four-count indictment - unlawful carnal knowledge and procuring a girl under age 14 - brought against him for his alleged improper relationship with a 13-year-old schoolgirl, with Judge Samuel Ademusu declaring there was not enough evidence to support the prosecution case.

"I am in agreement with the defence that there is not enough evidence on counts two and three and accordingly acquit and discharge him," Ademusu told the packed High Court courtroom.

There was no immediate response from Supt Halloran or his defence team, which was expected back in court on Thursday to hear the verdict answering the charges of conspiracy and indecent assault that are still pending.

The trial has been controversial from the beginning, based on allegations brought against Supt Halloran by his housemate and colleague at the war crimes tribunal, Mandy Cordwell.

An independent investigation by the UN-backed court found no evidence to support Ms Cordwell's allegations but the Sierra Leone Police pursued it, arresting Supt Halloran and keeping him in custody for several days before he was released on bail.

The Australian Government, too, got involved, putting pressure on Britain, Sierra Leone's former colonial power, to ensure a fair trial for the Victoria state police officer, who has consistently maintained his innocence.

Victorian Police Association secretary Paul Mullett meanwhile said today that Supt Halloran should be welcomed back to the Victoria Police if the third charge was dropped.

"If he is acquitted there should be no impediment whatsoever to his returning to the Victoria Police," Mr Mullett said.

"If he is acquitted, then he walks away an innocent man."

Mr Mullett criticised the Victoria Police command for failing to support Supt Halloran, who endured more than six months in a jail in the Sierra Leone capital, Freetown, and numerous delays in his trial.

"The chief commissioner has a view of keeping an open mind but generally the support for Supt Halloran from the Victoria Police force has been very disappointing," he said.

"From a leadership perspective, it is disappointing."

"Supt Halloran has a very long and good record with the Victoria Police force.

"He is a senior officer, so the silence has been deafening."

On radio 3AW today, Acting Victorian Premier John Thwaites said Halloran's return to the police force was a matter for Victoria Police command.

Agence France-Presse

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ABC Radio Australia

Radio Australia - News - Australian police officer cleared of sex charges

[This is the print version of story <http://www.abc.net.au/ra/news/stories/s1283639.htm>]

Last Updated 18/01/2005, 02:18:27

An Australian police officer has been acquitted of two sex charges in the West African nation of Sierra Leone.

Peter Halloran, who worked for the U-N backed war crimes tribunal in the Sierra Leone, was acquitted of charges of unlawful carnal knowledge and procuring a girl under fourteen, due to a lack of evidence.

He'll face court again on Thursday on two other charges of indecent assault and conspiracy.

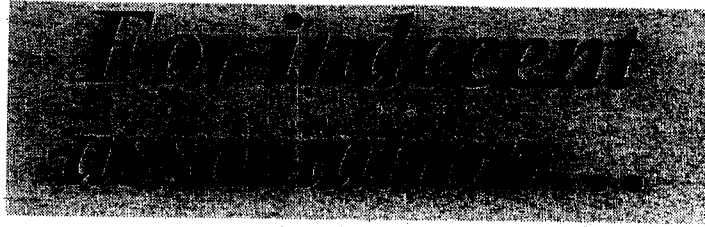
The controversial trial was based on evidence from another Australian officer working at the war crimes tribunal, who was Mr Halloran's housemate at the time.

An independent investigation by the U-N backed court found no evidence to support the allegations, but prosecutors in Sierra Leone decided to pursue the case anyway.

Mr Halloran has consistently maintained his innocence.

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Halloran to answer

BY UNISSA BANGURA

Justice Samuel Ademus of the Freetown High Court No. 1 yesterday ruled that the Australian police superintendent attached to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Peter Halloran as well as a certain Abdul Fofanah have a case to answer on two counts of indecent association with a minor, while two other counts against them were dismissed.

The judge was giving his ruling in respect of an earlier submission of 'no case' made by defence lawyers.

Justice Ademus said after his examination of all the submissions made by the defence lawyers, he found it necessary to acquit and discharge all

three accused persons in the case on counts two and three, which dealt with unlawful carnal knowledge and procuring a girl under the age of 14 contrary to section 10 of cap 31 of the laws of Sierra Leone 1960.

On the other counts of conspiracy and indecent assault the judge held that Peter Halloran and the other two accused persons had a case to answer.

A total of nine prosecution witnesses were led in evidence before arriving at the above conclusion.

The first accused person, Peter Holloran said he would like to give evidence on oath and call witnesses.

The matter was adjourned to January 20.

Halloran not guilty on two counts

Mohamed T. Fofanah
Peter Halloran, an investigator for the Special Court in Sierra Leone and two others—Sheka Fofanah and Abdul Fofanah were yesterday discharged on

two counts of procuring and unlawful carnal knowledge. Justice Ademusu who had adjourned the case previously to give rulings on the four count charges brought against these accused persons, ruled that

there is not enough evidence against first accused Peter Halloran and second accused Sheka Fofanah on count 2, which is 'procuring a girl under 14' and count

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Halloran not guilty on two counts

From Front Page
3, which is 'unlawful carnal knowledge'. Ademusu also ruled that since there is no case against Hollaran on count

2, he is discharged. On the other hand, he still has to answer for the charges that constitute count 4, which is 'indecent assault'. He will give

evidence under oath and produce witnesses to clear his name on the next adjourned date. The second and third accused would also state their defence on count 1 which is conspiracy.

Awoko

Tuesday January 18, 2005

Special Court Warns Nigeria

...Hand Over Taylor Now!

By Foday Fofana

The Special Court Prosecutor, Mr. David Crane, has told the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to immediately hand over war crime indictee and former President of Liberia.

Ex-President Charles Gangay Taylor, who is enjoying exile in Calabar, is wanted by the

UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone to face justice for his role in the decade long civil conflicts that wracked both Liberia and Sierra Leone for which he has been indicted Diplomatic and Special

Court sources say Mr. Crane made this demand to a visiting Nigerian delegation that was in Freetown mid last week to officially look at how the peace, disarmament and reintegration of ex-combatants was holding in Sierra Leone.

Insider sources told *The Exclusive* that the Nigerians

were sent by President Olusegun Obasanjo to directly listen to the persistent protests and complaints from the Special Court prosecutor regarding the extradition of Charles Taylor to face trial for war crimes, including his support for the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone.



David Crane



Charles Taylor

Contd. page 2

Hand Over Taylor Now!

From front page

Leone.

The resilient Special Court Prosecutor said that Mr. Taylor is still meddling in the political affairs of Liberia; having control over at least nine of the eighteen political parties there.

Embarrassment

"Charles Taylor has become an embarrassment to everyone. For President Kabbah in the first place who convinced his ECOWAS peers that it would be wisest to keep Taylor away from the Mano River sub-region... And for President Obasanjo himself who against the wish of the majority of Nigerians, went ahead and gave

him a safe haven," a Western diplomat commented.

The Exclusive learnt from the Foreign Ministry sources that even President Kabbah is now very worried that if Taylor can be in active politics in Liberia by remote control from Nigeria, there is no guarantee he could not be planning to destabilise Sierra Leone so as to get off the hook of the Special Court.

Obasanjo back tracks?

However, a senior Nigerian diplomat in Freetown told *The Exclusive* that, "The Sierra Leone public and its press are so gullible that they easily jump at speedy

conclusions... Who knows whether President Obasanjo after consulting President Kabbah, sent that delegation to Freetown last week to work out modalities on how to hand over Charles Taylor to the Sierra Leone Special Court?"

He concluded: "But rest assured that the Federal Republic of Nigeria will never allow Taylor to use our country as a launching pad to destabilise Liberia, Sierra Leone or Guinea because peace in the Mano River Union is tantamount to internal security in Nigeria and the West African sub-region." So be it!

The Exclusive

Tuesday January 18, 2005

UNMIL Daily Radio Summary **Monday, 17 Jan 2005**

Following are excerpts of select Liberian radio station news programs. Parts of the transcripts have been paraphrased and edited to conform to UNMIL style.

RADIO VERITAS (News monitored yesterday at 18:45 and 21:30)

Presidential Aspirants and others Press for Taylor's Appearance before the War Crimes Court in Sierra Leone

- Speaking recently at a political forum for several Liberian presidential aspirants held in a church in Philadelphia, USA by the Association of Liberian Women in Pennsylvania, the New Deal Presidential aspirant, George Kie, said his party will press for the surrender of exiled former president Charles Taylor to the Sierra Leone Special Court for trial. Dr. Kie said the New Deal Movement would cooperate with the United Nations, which set up the court, and ECOWAS to ensure that Mr. Taylor answers war crime charges in Freetown.
- Last week the Secretary-General's Special Representative for West Africa, Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, said in Dakar that ex-president Taylor's prosecution was not an immediate priority for the UN. Special Representative Abdallah said the asylum given to Taylor was a price for peace in Liberia, and did not mean that Taylor is escaping justice.
- Meanwhile, two other Liberian presidential aspirants in the U.S. Dr. Joseph Kpoto of the Liberia Action Party (LAP) and the former president of the collapsed LUBI bank, Samuel Devine also expressed support for the surrender of former president Charles Taylor to the Sierra Leone Court. Dr. Kpoto said Taylor and others must face the court to account for their deals. Mr. Devine said Mr. Taylor who was accused for causing chaos in West Africa by his support for former Sierra Leone rebels (RUF) must have his day in court.

VOA 14-January-2005

Ivory Coast Prime Minister Appeals for War's End

Nico Colombant, Abidjan

The Ivory Coast National Unity Prime Minister Seydou Diarra has asked for President Laurent Gbagbo to declare the end of hostilities with northern rebels, amid stalled peacemaking efforts.

Mr. Diarra says he made his appeal to send a strong signal to take divided Ivory Coast back on track towards peace.

Mr. Gbagbo responded by asking Mr. Diarra to give him more input on the tone, timing and content of the statement. The exchange took place during a cabinet meeting on Thursday.

It follows a failed mediation visit this week by South African President Thabo Mbeki who was hoping to bring the rebels and Mr. Gbagbo back into dialogue to pave the way for disarmament.

Rebels have refused to disarm, accusing Mr. Gbagbo of failing to properly implement successive peace deals.

Thursday, opposition leaders held a joint meeting in Abidjan, expressing frustration at what they called the unwillingness for peace.

One member of this coalition, known locally as the G-7, is Alassane Salif N'Diaye.

"We don't the war," he said. "We are working for the peace. All things we are doing now is for the peace and we are sure if everybody really wants peace we have together to apply Linas-Marcoussis agreement and Accra Three agreements. Now for us it's not in our mind to see again Cote d'Ivoire in the war."

The developments also come as the former head of the armed forces, Mathias Doue, and the former head of the air force, Yapo Seka, have apparently gone missing.

Their cell phones have been turned off and some of their aides say they don't know where they are.

General Doue was seeking to travel outside the country after his dismissal, but according to his aides, he has not yet received a visa to travel. An editorial in a newspaper favorable to Mr. Gbagbo Friday, says Mr. Doue staged his own disappearance to stir up trouble.

The two men were dismissed in mid-November shortly after French peacekeeping forces ended protests and riots in the government-held south and aerial attacks in the rebel-held north, by firing on protesters and destroying Ivorian military aircraft.