

**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:**

Monday, April 25, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.  
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Panafrican News Agency (PANA) Daily Newswire April 22, 2005

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Panafrican News Agency (PANA) Daily Newswire

April 22, 2005

#### HEADLINE: UN-BACKED FREETOWN COURT ENFORCES BAN ON MINORS AT HEARINGS

Freetown, Sierra Leone (PANA) - Cameroonian-born Judge Benjamin Mutanga Itoe of the UN-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone expelled a 10-year-old boy and his father from the courtroom in enforcing the court's rules barring underage children from attending its proceedings, reports said here Friday.

The court's rule states that children below the age of 12 are not allowed to witness trials, while those above 12 years are only permitted in the court if accompanied by their parents or an elderly person.

The judge took the decision when he noticed the boy, sitting by his father, while a former child combatant codenamed TFI 141 was undergoing cross examination by defence lawyers representing the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) second accused, Morris Kallon.

The boy was visibly frightened by the testimony, leading Judge Itoe to suspend the hearings for a couple of minutes while the 10-year-old and his father were being escorted from the courtroom.

Resuming the trial, Judge Itoe placed the blame squarely on the security guards who, he said, had failed to ascertain the age of the child before allowing him to enter the court premises.

"I think there was a lapse on the part of the security guards," Itoe said, and instructed security personnel to vigorously enforce the court's rule barring minors from attending its proceedings.

The court is trying those accused of bearing the highest responsibility for human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian laws during Sierra Leone's decade-long civil war that ended in 2002.

Salone Times. Mon 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2005.

## US CONGRESS WANTS TAYLOR EXTRADITED

*Describing ex-Liberian Leader and Special Court indictee, Charles Taylor as a threat to security in West Africa, US Congressman, Ed Royce introduced a resolution last week calling on Nigeria to turn the indictee over to the Special Court. The resolution reads:*

Calling on the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to transfer Charles Ghankay Taylor, former President of the Republic of Liberia, to the Special Court for Sierra Leone to be tried for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Whereas on January 16, 2002, as requested by United Nations Security Council Resolution 1315 (2000), an agreement was signed by the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the United Nations to establish the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Whereas the Special Court for Sierra Leone was given the power to prosecute persons who have committed and "bear the greatest responsibility" for war crimes, crimes against humanity, other serious violations of international humanitarian law, and certain crimes under Sierra Leonean law committed within the territory of Sierra Leone during that country's brutal civil war during the period after November 30, 1996.

Whereas on June 4, 2003, the Special Court for Sierra Leone unsealed an indictment issued on March 3, 2003, against Charles Ghankay Taylor, former President of the Republic of Liberia, charging him with seventeen counts of war crimes, crimes against humanity and other violations of international humanitarian law relating to his role in directly supporting and materially, logistically, and politically abetting the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and its actions, including its notorious wide-spread and systematic attacks upon the civilian population of Sierra Leone.

Whereas the indictment of Charles Taylor includes charges of terrorizing civilians and subjecting civil-

ians to collective punishment, mass murder, sexual slavery and rape, abduction and hostage taking, severe mutilation, including the cutting off of limbs and other physical violence and inhumane acts, enslavement, forced labour, forced military conscription, including force conscription of children, theft, arson, looting, and pillage, and widespread attacks upon the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and humanitarian workers by the Revolutionary United Front combatants;

Whereas the Revolutionary United Front was notorious for brutally murdering and torturing civilians, including the amputation of limbs with machetes, and by carving "RUF" onto the bodies of thousands of victims, including women and children.

Whereas the Revolutionary United Front made widespread use of abducted children as labourers and soldiers and forced many of the abducted children to perform severe human rights abuses, constituting a serious crime under the jurisdiction of the Special Court for Sierra Leone;

Whereas on August 11, 2003, Charles Taylor departed Liberia for Calabar, Nigeria, where he was granted asylum and, according to press reports, agreed to end his involvement in Liberian politics;

Whereas in September 2003 the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria warned Taylor that it would "not tolerate any breach of this condition and others which forbid him from engaging in active communications with anyone engaged in political, illegal or governmental activities in Liberia;"

Whereas the United States, Nigeria, and other concerned nations have contributed extensive political, human, military, financial, and material resources toward the building of peace and stability in Liberia and Sierra Leone;

Whereas the Special Court for Sierra Leone has con-

tributed to developing the rule of law in Sierra Leone and is deserving of support;

Whereas on March 17, 2005, the United Nations Secretary-General reported to the United Nations Security Council that Charles Taylor's "former military commanders and business associates, as well as members of his political party, maintain regular contact with him and are planning to undermine the peace process" in Liberia; Whereas David Crane, Chief Prosecutor at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, stated: "Unless and until Charles Taylor is brought to justice, there will be no peace. Charles Taylor is a big cloud hanging over Liberia. He is still ruling the country from his house arrest in Calabar. His agents remain influential in the country;"

Whereas on March 22, 2005, Jacques Klein, the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General to Liberia, stated: "Charles Taylor is a psychopath and a killer... He's still very much involved (in and is...) intrusive in Liberian politics.;" and

Whereas Charles Taylor remains a serious present and continuing threat to Liberian and West African sub-regional political stability, security, and peace, and to United States interests in the region: Now, therefore, be it

1. Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress urges the Government of the
2. Federal Republic of Nigeria to expeditiously transfer
3. Charles Ghankay Taylor, former President of the Republic
4. of Liberia, to the jurisdiction of the Special Court for
5. Sierra Leone to undergo a fair and open trial for war crimes,
6. crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of
7. international humanitarian law.

## A Protected Friend of Terrorism

By Douglas Farah

Washington Post

Monday, April 25, 2005; A19

The Bush administration is touting the rule of law and democracy as priorities in its effort to create stability and defeat terrorism. Yet it remains curiously apathetic about the activities of one of the world's most notorious indicted war criminals, a man who is also an abettor of al Qaeda and Hezbollah. I am speaking of former Liberian president Charles Taylor, who has not only escaped answering for his crimes so far but who may be given an opportunity to repeat them if the United States does not act.

It seems to matter little here that Taylor's efforts to escape justice may well succeed because of U.S. inertia. Indicted on 17 counts of crimes against humanity, Taylor poses a clear and present danger to West Africa and U.S. interests. Yet the State Department continues to respond to congressional inquiries with bland assurances that everything is fine and Taylor is no longer a problem. It's not true.

Unless Taylor is turned over quickly to the U.N.-backed Special Court for Sierra Leone to stand trial, he will never face punishment for the crimes he committed in the region at the cost of tens of thousands of dead and hundreds of thousands of lives destroyed. The mandate of the court, largely funded by the United States, expires at the end of the year. It was established to try those "most responsible" for the atrocities in Sierra Leone. Taylor is at the top of the list.

Taylor's were brutal, vicious crimes. For more than a decade he presided over forces that murdered, raped and mutilated children; they also abducted children to use them as cannon fodder. He created "Small Boys Units" made up of specially trained children who, while high on amphetamines, were used to raze villages and murder civilians. He trained and supplied the Revolutionary United Front in neighboring Sierra Leone, whose signature atrocity was hacking off the arms, legs and ears of civilians, many of them children.

Taylor also hosted diamond buyers from al Qaeda and Hezbollah for several years, allowing the two designated terrorist groups to earn and hide their wealth in an asset that is untraceable and easily convertible to cash.

In August 2003, under siege militarily, Taylor fled to Nigeria under an asylum deal backed by the Bush administration and Britain's Tony Blair. The terms of the agreement with Nigerian president Olusegun Obasanjo were that Taylor not be allowed to participate in "active communications with anyone engaged in political, illegal or governmental activities in Liberia." In return, Obasanjo would not be criticized for harboring an indicted war criminal. Obasanjo promised to turn Taylor over only if the new Liberian government requested it.

There is clear evidence -- gathered by the court, U.N. officials in Liberia and European intelligence services -- that Taylor has made a mockery of the asylum agreement, meddling in Liberia's electoral process by phone, e-mail, fax and cash payments. The court has revealed evidence that Taylor funded and planned an unsuccessful January assassination attempt against Lansana Conte, the president of Guinea.

An investigation by the Coalition for International Justice has found that Taylor is spending some of the millions of dollars he looted to pay for campaigns of several of Liberia's presidential contenders. His financial empire, built on shell companies and businesses stretching from Nigeria to Europe and the Caribbean, is feeding resources to his longtime business associates and military loyalists. He will have the protection of whoever wins the October election. The new government will then make sure Taylor can return home and never face the court. Once he outlasts the court's mandate, he will have escaped prosecution and will continue to wreak havoc.

U.N. Secretary General Kofi Annan last month told the Security Council that Taylor's "former military commanders and business associates, as well as members of his political party, maintain regular contact with him and are planning to undermine the peace process" in Liberia. David Crane, the court's chief prosecutor, said that "Taylor is still ruling the country from his house arrest." Yet the Bush administration has offered no support for turning Taylor over to the court. The State Department has, in several recent briefings, equivocated on whether U.S. policy really supports such a move. Part of the reason may be Taylor's long association with U.S. intelligence services. During much of the 1990s, Taylor was close to Moammar Gaddafi, the main financier of Taylor's wars. Taylor regularly reported on his meetings to U.S. intelligence agencies and was paid for the information. While the use of informants is necessary, protecting Taylor in the face of unspeakable atrocities just because of that historical relationship should not be tolerated.

Faced with the administration's apathy, a bipartisan group of legislators is taking the lead. Reps. Ed Royce (R-Calif.), Sue W. Kelly (R-N.Y.), Frank R. Wolf (R-Va.), Victor F. Snyder (D-Ark.) and Tom Lantos (D-Calif.) are co-sponsoring a concurrent resolution calling for Taylor's expeditious handover to the court.

The congressional action is helpful, but what is really needed is the administration's active support for Taylor's immediate extradition. The administration must acknowledge that Nigeria acted in the best interests of the region by taking him and thank Obasanjo for his help. Britain has already done this. But Obasanjo must have the political cover of public U.S. support to hand Taylor over. If Taylor escapes prosecution, West Africa will be endangered and U.S. moral leadership severely diminished.

The writer is a former bureau chief for The Post in West Africa. He is investigating Charles Taylor's financial network for the Coalition for International Justice, a Washington-based group.

**United Nations**



**Nations Unies**

United Nations Mission in Liberia  
(UNMIL)

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**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary  
22 April 2005**

**Pro-Democracy Activist Campaigns for Trial of Former President**

*(The Analyst, The News)*

- Liberian pro-democracy activist and lawyer, Jerome Verdier is currently visiting the United States where he told a gathering at the Knight Law School in California yesterday that he was on a campaign tour to have former President Charles Taylor brought before the Sierra Leone Special Court which indicted him for war crimes in 2003.

**West Africa's Religious Leaders Press for Trial of Former Liberian Leader**

*(New Democrat)*

- Under the auspices of the West Africa Inter- religious Council, West African religious leaders from Liberia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Ivory Coast at the end of a six day consultative meeting held in Monrovia recently called on the Government of Nigeria to handover former President Charles Taylor who is indicted for war crimes to the Special Court in Sierra Leone for trial

## Students From South Africa Visit Sierra Leone

By Abdul Samad Kamara

Students from the Centre of Human Rights University of Pretoria South Africa are currently on a ten-day visit in Sierra Leone.

According to the Assistant Director of the Centre, Norman Taku, the purpose of the visit is part of the course requirement (Human Rights in the field) which exposes students to the practical issues of Human Rights in Africa. He said the Centre for Human Rights in South Africa offer a unique opportunity to which 30 top law graduates from different African Universities are admitted each year.

To date about 166 students have graduated in Masters of Law in Human Rights and democratisation in Africa,

he noted.

He said during the course of the visit students will learn about the civil war in Sierra Leone and observe the cases presently being heard at the Special Court in Sierra Leone. The students will also visit institutions that deal with the outcome of the war for e.g. UNAMSIL, civil society organisations, International non-government institutions Human Rights organisations etc.

Mr. Norman Taku said the Centre for Human Rights has a regional co-operation initiative in partnerships with the Catholic University of Central Africa, the American University in Cairo, the University of Ghana Makerere University, Universidade

Ednardo Mondlane (Mozambique) and the University of the Western Cape South Africa which implies that the partnership covers all the sub-regions in Africa.

The first Sierra Leonean to graduate from the Centre of Human Rights Melron Nicol Wilson who is also the Director of LAWCLA expressed gratitude to the Assistant Director and encouraged Sierra Leonean Law graduates to enroll at the University which in his words offer a world class education in the field of Human Rights.

About five Sierra Leonean Lawyers have graduated from the Centre of Human Rights University of Pretoria.

## LAWCLA interacts with human rights students

*BY AUGUSTINE BEECHER*

Ten foreign human rights law students mainly from East Africa, and some supervisors met with journalists and officials from the Lawyers Center for Legal Assistance (LAWCLA) at the Hill Valley Hotel on Thursday, April 21st for an exchange of ideas regarding the human rights situation in the country.

The students, who are on

a two-week field trip to understudy human rights institutions in the country, especially the Special Court for Sierra Leone, are graduate students from the Centre for Human Rights at the University Pretoria in South Africa.

The field trip is a part of the requirements for students at the center for the Master of Laws in Human Rights and Democracy in

Africa, a program that has already attracted and benefited five Sierra Leoneans including the current director of Lawcla, Mr. Melron Nicol-Wilson.

The students are required at the end of the trip, to make a report with regards to their course of study as well as evaluating the particular institution studied, in this case, the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

The assistant director of the center, Mr. Norman Taku, who accompanied the students in the company of three other officials of the centre, explained that there are thirty students usually in the program annually, drawn from various African countries, adding that those eligible are most likely the best law students or highly motivated students from the field of law and human rights in African countries.

The center, he noted, is open to all African students who satisfy the conditions of entry, it is fully funded, and consists of at least six months intensive course work and a field trip.

Since the start of the program, the field trips have been generally to Rwanda, where there had been glaring violations of human rights, but the directors decided this year to bring some of the students to Sierra Leone, through the intervention and collaboration of Lawcla director, a former student, who felt that our human rights situation also required close academic review.

He reiterated the need for the students to exercise patience and understanding in the approach to issues and officials at the Special Court on how it operates the way it does.

He also advised the group to visit other human rights institutions and groups in the country, as well as NGOs involved in human rights, for a clear picture of the human rights situation in the country.

The group of students, who arrived with a professor at the head of the program, an American Fulbright lecturer, and a program manager, are to depart sometime this week.





## Serb general set for surrender

**A former Yugoslav army chief indicted on war crimes charges has agreed to surrender to the UN tribunal in The Hague, the Serbian government says.**

It said that General Nebojsa Pavkovic - who is now retired - was persuaded to give himself up voluntarily.

Gen Pavkovic, 59, is wanted for alleged crimes during the 1998-99 conflict in Serbia's province of Kosovo.

Thousands of ethnic Albanians were killed there during the crackdown by the Serbian security forces.

The European Union has repeatedly said that the surrender of key war crimes suspects was one of the pre-condition for closer ties between Brussels and Belgrade.

EU foreign ministers will meet on Monday to decide whether to consider Serbia for associate status in the 25-member bloc.

### 'Terror campaign'

A statement by the Serbian government quoted Gen Pavkovic as saying he would fly to the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY) as an "honourable soldier who has devoted his life and honour to his country".

The statement added that Gen Pavkovic - who until now refused to co-operate with the tribunal - would give himself up on Monday.

The indictments against the general - and also three other army and police officers - were unsealed by the Hague prosecutors in October 2003.

Two of his co-accused, Sreten Lukic and Vladimir Lazarevic, have already surrendered to the UN war crimes tribunal. The third - Vlastimir Djordjevic - is believed to be hiding in Russia.

Gen Pavkovic was the commander of the Third Army in Kosovo during the conflict.

According to the indictment, the four accused officers planned and executed a "deliberate and widespread or systematic campaign of terror and violence directed at Kosovo Albanian civilians".

### Changing sides

Gen Pavkovic was an ally of former President Slobodan Milosevic, who is standing trial on war crimes charges in The Hague.

He later switched support to Serbia's new democratic authorities, after refusing to use troops against demonstrators during the protests that led to the overthrow of Mr Milosevic in Belgrade.

He was backed by Mr Milosevic's successor Vojislav Kostunica, despite outside pressure for his removal.

However, Mr Kostunica removed him in 2002 following a spy scandal.

Story from BBC NEWS:  
<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/europe/4473729.stm>

Published: 2005/04/22 15:16:05 GMT

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## World armed groups 'abduct girls'

**A "hidden army" of girls - some as young as eight - is being forced to work for armed groups involved in conflicts worldwide, a charity says.**

A Save The Children report found over 120,000 girls and young women have been abducted and pushed into conflict.

The charity says they often end up serving as soldiers or performing domestic jobs but almost of them all are forced into becoming sex slaves.

It urged world leaders to do more to stop "the war on children".

Figures released by Save The Children showed that around 6,500 girls have been captured by the rebel Lord's Resistance Army in Uganda.

In the Democratic Republic of Congo another 12,000 are believed to be involved in armed organisations while another 21,500 (43% of all children fighting) are thought to be associated with conflict in Sri Lanka.

A spokesman for the organisation said the study was not unique to any one country or continent and it showed a worrying global trend.

The report also criticised world leaders and donors for failing to address the problem and said that rehabilitation programmes set up by the international community were considerably underfunded.

Director general of Save the Children Mike Aaronson added: "When people picture conflict they think of men in bloody combat, but it's horrifyingly girls who are the hidden face of war.

"This appalling abuse of girls' rights demands urgent action. Its time to stop the war on children."

Story from BBC NEWS:  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk\\_news/4478913.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/uk_news/4478913.stm)

Published: 2005/04/25 02:46:30 GMT

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