

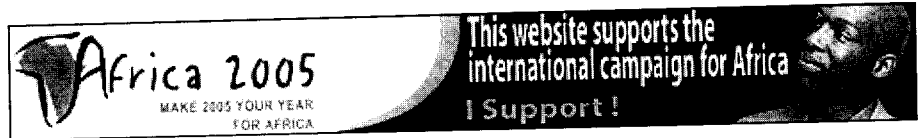
SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
PRESS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE

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 04, 2005

The press clips are produced Monday to Friday.
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'Drag Taylor to the Court'

The Analyst (Monrovia)

NEWS

April 1, 2005

Posted to the web April 1, 2005

By Veronica Kpan

Fahnbulleh Tells War Crimes Court Officials

Says Justice Must be Done

The former president of Liberia, Charles Taylor, was in Accra to set the ball rolling for the Liberian peace process when on May 6, 2003, a court warrant was presented to the Ghanaian Foreign Ministry for his arrest. Taylor has earlier on May 4 indicted on a 17-count charge of committing rape, murder, and torture in Sierra Leone.

Even though they support the work of the UN-backed Special War Crimes Tribunal in Sierra Leone which indicted Taylor, West African leaders gathering in Accra at the time rejected Taylor's arrest while still a head of state and the leader of perhaps one of the largest warring parties in Liberia. The deal that was reportedly worked out between some ECOWAS leaders and representatives of the U.S. Government, the United Nations, and other international organizations, according to Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, gave Nigeria the moral ground to grant red-carpet asylum to Taylor in Calabar and to resist his extradition to Sierra at the request of the court. Nigeria's insistence on keeping Taylor in Calabar until the inauguration of a new president in Liberia leads many to the conclusion that the Sierra Leone trial may never go ahead. But some believe it will and must. As Veronica Kpan reports, Taylor's rival in the 1997 elections, Dr. H. Boimah Fahnbulleh, is back home and is voting for Taylor's summary extradition to face his accusers in Freetown.

Dr. H. Boimah Fahnbulleh, formerly of the Reformation Alliance Party (RAP), has called for the summary extradition of Charles Taylor to Sierra Leone to face his accusers.

He told journalists in an exclusive interview that Taylor's trial would served the dual purpose of establishing justice and deterring unscrupulous individuals serving in national leadership positions or other capacities from wantonly violating the human rights of their subjects.

For that to happen in this age of globalization and intense search for regional peace and stability, it was imperative that Taylor was taken to Freetown to answer charges of crimes against humanity that include rape, murder, and torture.

Dr. Fahnbulleh has no doubt that Taylor bears the greatest responsibility for the mayhem committed by the Revolutionary United Front of Cpl Foday Sankoh in its 10-year military campaign to oust and take over the rein

of government in Sierra Leone.

In his view, the best way out for the former Liberian leader, now an indicted war criminal, is to face the court in order to exonerate himself from charges leveled against him.

"I think Taylor should be dragged, and I am not saying taken, but dragged from Calabar and brought before the court in Sierra Leone to be judged, being responsible for crimes against humanity," Dr.

Fahnbulleh, who is also a former professor of political science at the University of Liberia, said.

Mr. Taylor has been indicted by the UN-backed Special War Crimes Court on 17 counts of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his role in the death, rape, abduction, and mutilation of thousands of civilians during Sierra Leone long running civil war.

Many, including former first lady Jewel Howard-Taylor believe the trial and conviction of Taylor in Sierra Leone would have no effect in settling the question of who chopped off the limbs of thousands of Sierra Leonean during Sankoh's campaign of terror.

In their view, the best the UN and the Sierra Leone Government would do is to drop the charges against Mr.

Taylor or opt for his trial in Liberia for any crime committed there.

Mrs. Taylor said in a recent interview with the Ovation Magazine of Nigeria relations to Taylor's extradition and trial in Sierra Leone: "So they created the scenario of Charles Taylor being a monster. And I have said, if they want to bring Charles Taylor to book, let them set up a war crimes court in Liberia and give him a chance to have a free trial, he is already convicted in Sierra Leone and nothing is going to happen. I remember seeing Foddey Sankoh, they had shown his picture in one of those West African magazines, he looked terrible, it seems that they had done something to him, when you compare it to the pictures we had seen before. He could not even lift up his head he looked terrible. In three months he became a vegetable, what did they do to him?"

Nobody knows, nobody is going to find out, nobody will ask, but the decks are already stacked against Charles Taylor. Why don't they take him to The Hague? Why should he to go Freetown because it is intended to take him there and have him killed? He would never have a free trial, he will never have a fair trial and for me he is already convicted." Whether or not Dr. Fahnbulleh would concede the points Mrs. Taylor has been making across the West African subregion is not known, but there are indications that given the decision to make, he would go for nothing less than a Taylor arraigned before David Crane's justice chambers in Freetown.

Already, is suggesting that, when found guilty after a fair trial in Sierra Leone, Taylor and others associated with the death and destruction in Sierra Leone must face capital punishment to serve as a deterrent.

Rather than an angel painted black by international conspiracy as Jewel perceives Taylor's indictment, Fahnbulleh said he loathes Taylor being referred to as former president, saying he is a "contemptible character who got into politics and enriched himself at the expense of the ordinary Liberian masses." "In the process, he destroyed a nation, ruined the people's lives, spread anarchy in the sub-region and looted this country massively with no regret by him and his collaborators," he said.

The debate of Taylor's angelic deeds and international conspiracy and his role in the amputation, abduction, raping, and murder of thousands of Sierra Leoneans is drawn out with no one seems to be getting the better side.

It is only the court that will establish the truth, but with the court running out of steam over Nigeria's refusal to let go a principal suspect, some say the chances of Taylor facing any tribunal in Sierra Leone is slim.

But with Fahnbulleh teaming with scores of human rights advocates to push for Taylor's extradition, observers are beginning to see new vigor and they believe it is only a matter of time before Taylor faces some sort of justice.

In another development, Dr. Fahnbulleh who returned to Liberia recently following years of stay abroad has announced plans to return to the Liberia People's Party (LPP), this time as a "recruiting agent and not as active partisan." He said his decision to come back was based on the request of partisans, calling on him to come back for the upliftment of the party in preparation for the October polls.

He said he has returned to the country to engage in farming activities and not to be active in politics.

"I have come back to be a farmer because I have been impressed by farming in London. I will also play a low profile in the party but my ears and eyes will remain open," Dr. Fahnbulleh told partisans at a special forum held in his honor by some members of the National Executive Committee of the LPP.

The program was held Tuesday at the party's Benson Street office in Monrovia.

He noted that he was coming back to the party as a cadre of MOJA, the Movement of Justice in Africa because he knows what it stands for.

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United Nations



Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia
(UNMIL)

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

International Clips on Liberia

04/01/2005 16:04:57

Liberian fighters recruited by warring sides in Ivory Coast: UN

MONROVIA, April 1 (AFP) - Both rebel and government forces in Ivory Coast are recruiting men who fought in neighbouring Liberia's civil war, a top United Nations official said here Friday. "According to reports we have received Liberian fighters are crossing the border to join either the (rebel) New Forces or the government side," Abou Moussa, UN Secretary General Kofi Annan's special representative in Liberia, told reporters.

International Clips on West Africa

Ivory Coast UN peacekeeping to get short renewal

01 Apr 2005 23:20:32 GMT, By Irwin Arief

UNITED NATIONS, April 1 (Reuters) - The Security Council is expected to renew the U.N. peacekeeping mission in Ivory Coast for a month on Monday out of concern that an African Union mediation effort may be at an impasse, diplomats said. The council is expected to give the mission's mandate a one-month extension, instead of the usual six months or a year, to see whether mediation -- led by South African President Thabo Mbeki -- can show results, the diplomats said, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Ivory Coast leader says disarmament key for talks

By Loucoumane Coulibaly

ABIDJAN, April 2 (Reuters) - Ivory Coast's leader wants peace talks to focus on rebel disarmament on Sunday, setting up a showdown with civil war foes who say they will only give up their guns after political reforms.

COTE D IVOIRE: UN highlights tide of human rights abuse in run-up to peace summit

ABIDJAN, 1 April (IRIN) - The UN peacekeeping force in Cote d'Ivoire has published a detailed and scathing report on recent human rights abuses in Cote d'Ivoire as President Laurent Gbagbo prepares for a face-to-face meeting with rebel leader Guillaume Soro at fresh peace talks in South Africa on Sunday.

"Despite some encouraging improvements in the human rights situation observed during the months of January and February, the overall situation remained worrying," the report concluded.



ICC probes Colombia on war crimes

The International Criminal Court has asked the Colombian government for details of crimes against humanity which may have occurred in the country.

Colombia is suffering from a four-decade-old civil war which sees about 3,000 people killed every year.

Colombia's ICC representative has said his government will fully co-operate with the tribunal.

The ICC considers cases of genocide or crimes against humanity committed since it started work in 2002.

'Thousands killed'

The ICC has also asked for details of government proposals for a truce with the main right-wing paramilitary group, the AUC.

Some human rights groups say provisions of the bill mean serious past abuses will go unpunished.

The information received so far indicates thousands of people have been killed, disappeared, kidnapped and forcibly displaced since 1 November, 2002

Luis Moreno, ICC chief prosecutor

If the bill is passed, paramilitary commanders are expected to face a maximum of 10 years in prison.

Colombia's civil war has seen leftist rebel groups fighting right-wing paramilitary factions and government troops.

All parties have been accused of abuses.

"The information received so far indicates thousands of people have been killed, disappeared, kidnapped and forcibly displaced since 1 November 2002," said Luis Moreno, an Argentine, who is the court's chief prosecutor.

Colombia was one of the signatories to an accord which set up the ICC based in The Hague, Netherlands.

Story from BBC NEWS:

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/go/pr/fr/-/2/hi/americas/4399027.stm>

Published: 2005/03/31 20:33:41 GMT