

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, June 27, 2005

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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The News. Mon June 25th 2005.

"Special Court cannot hinder stability"

By Allieu Kamara

The former Special Court Representative of the Secretary General for the Democratic Republic of Congo, Dr. Namanga Ngongi has said that the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone cannot destroy the hard won peace in the country.

Dr. Ngongi was in the country over the weekend to participate in the conference on Disar-

- Dr. Ngongi

mament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Stability in Africa.

Responding to journalists on questions raised about

Cont. page 2

"Special Court cannot hinder stability"

From front page
the issue of addressing impunity, at a press briefing at Miatta Conference Hall in Freetown, at the end of the DDR conference, Dr. Ngongi emphasized that in all conflict situations, the factor of justice is recommended at peace accords to forestall further persecution of war by fighting forces. He said that is why the UN often establishes Special Court during peace making process.

Speaking also on the issue of impunity, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Momodu Koroma said Special Court is not a bad precedent. "As

government, we resisted the recommendation of the UN to establish the Special Court during the first peace accord," Mr. Koroma said, adding "when the RUF massacred innocent citizens in Freetown in May 8th 2002, - the UN came and reminded us about the essence of addressing impunity.

That is our own case of the Special Court."

Koroma went on to say that participants at the conference including representatives of UN agencies agreed that

one of the recommendations of the conference should include international community's support and work in genuine partnership with national DDR stakeholders and DDR funding mechanisms to be flexible and timely. Other recommendations of the conference include regional perspectives in the design and implementation of DDR programmes, resettlement, rehabilitation efforts for all war-affected populations and ways of further improving DDR programmes in Africa.

Cocorioko Website

Revealed at Special Court.

How Tikonko saw hell day military overthrew President Kabbah

By Tamba Borbor in Freetown

Saturday June 25, 2005

Giving evidence before the Trial Chamber of the Special Court, Prosecution witness TF1-004 has told the Court that 20 people were buried in a grave in Tikonko around the market area.

Led in evidence by the Prosecution team, the witness maintained that after he heard an announcement on the Radio that the AFRC junta had overthrown the Government of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, some soldiers came to the village on the 25th of June 1997.

The witness said that when they returned from their hiding places as he was searching for his wife and children, he saw a man and his child lying down dead after been shot on the back. "I went to on another house and met two dead women- one was lying with her head between the legs of the other. As I was going towards the junction, I saw another corpse with his feet chopped off. About hundred yards from my house, I also saw one man that had been shot by the soldiers lying in a gutter dead," the male witness narrated.

He went on to explain that he saw a lot of corpses lying all about the place. At night he went on, as he was afraid to be in the village alone, so he went into the bush to spend the night. Early the next day, his son helped him to find his wife. Later in the day he recounted, the Paramount Chief and the Chiefdom Speaker gave orders that the corpses need to be buried as the stench was disturbing the town. "We dug a hole and started collecting the corpses. At first we collected eleven and later picked up nine more bodies and buried them in one mass grave around the market area.

During cross-examination by Lawyer A. Manley-Spaine, the witness was asked whether he knew any of the soldiers that were involved in the killing of civilians. The witness said he could remember three of them. "One was called Brima Moisia, Junior Mesalie and one who was nick-named 'Babou Paddy' who was staying with me when he was first deployed in Tikonko during the war."

The witness was also questioned about the way he got the information about the overthrow of the Government by the juntas. To this, the witness said he got it through the radio. Manley-Spaine then challenged the witness and read from the statement that the witness had earlier made to the Special Court investigators. In this statement, TF1-004 had said that they were sitting under a tree together with one Pastor Khobe and Alie Koroma when Amadu came and informed them that the soldiers are coming. The statement went on to state that "the soldiers came and gave them the information that they are now in control of the Government." "The witness then told them that he was with them," the statement read.

LIBERIA-NIGERIA: 2,000 more Liberian refugees to return from Nigeria

ABUJA, 24 Jun 2005 (IRIN) - Nigeria will shortly resume the repatriation of Liberian refugees with the return of some 2,000 people who fled their home country more than 15 years ago as civil war broke out.

A transport operation was agreed by Nigerian and Liberian refugee officials with the backing of the UN refugee agency UNHCR and was signed by all parties in the capital, Abuja, on Thursday.

A total of 903 refugees left Nigeria under a UNHCR-supervised repatriation programme last year, said Moremi Soyinka-Onijala, a Nigerian presidential aide.

The new agreement covers a further 2,009 people, leaving behind just 651 of the 3,563 Liberian refugees in Nigeria who signed up to go home, he said.

An estimated 350,000 refugees fled to other West African countries during Liberia's civil war which raged from 1989 to 2003.

The UNHCR operation to repatriate them is moving at a snail's pace. By mid-June, UNHCR said it has assisted the repatriation of just 21,000 refugees, mostly from neighbouring Sierra Leone and Guinea.

However, the United Nations reckons that a further 100,000 people have returned home spontaneously.

Although some of the refugees leaving Nigeria will be home in time for Liberia's presidential elections on 11 October, they will not be allowed to vote. Refugees had to be home by 4 June to register for a ballot paper.

Nigeria is still home to former Liberian president Charles Taylor, who was granted political asylum there to facilitate an August 2003 peace deal which brought the war to an end.

Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo is coming under increasing international pressure to turn Taylor over to stand trial at Sierra Leone's Special Court for supporting the country's Revolutionary United Front rebel movement and supplying it with weapons in exchange for smuggled Sierra Leonean diamonds.

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United Nations



Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 24 June 2005

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International Clips on West Africa

06/24/2005 12:47:47

UN bolsters Ivory Coast mission ahead of elections

By Herve Couturier

UNITED NATIONS, June 24 (AFP) - The UN Security Council on Friday voted to strengthen the UN peacekeeping mission in the Ivory Coast ahead of elections due to start in late October.

The 15-member council unanimously passed resolution 1609, which extended the UN mission for another seven months and gave backing to French forces in the West African country.

06/24/2005 09:50:31

Ouattara, rebels to Pretoria for Ivory Coast peace talks next week

ABIDJAN, June 24 (AFP) - Ivory Coast's main opposition leader Alassane Ouattara and northern rebels announced Friday that they would be participating in new peace talks next week in South Africa.

A spokesman for Ouattara's Rally for Republicans party, Aly Coulibaly, confirmed the former prime minister's attendance at the talks in Pretoria likely to focus on the thorny problem of disarmament that has impeded reconciliation in the west African state.

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UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 25 June 2005

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International Clips on Liberia

06/24/2005 23:27:04

UN reports challenges for keeping Liberia's peace process on track

UNITED NATIONS, Jun 24, 2005 (Xinhua via COMTEX) -- Despite tangible signs of progress in Liberia's peace process, significant challenges still need to be urgently addressed, including dealing with ex-combatants who are now resorting to violence and threatening to disrupt upcoming elections, UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan said in a report on Friday.

"The remaining six months of the transition period are most important for laying the foundations for a peaceful and democratic Liberia. Any efforts to disrupt the electoral process should be expeditiously addressed," Annan said in his latest report to the Security Council on the work of the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

He said that the prolonged delays in providing reintegration opportunities for former fighters and in restructuring Liberia's armed forces have been primarily due to funding shortfalls.

International Clips on West Africa

The Economist - 06/25/2005.

The United Nations should not abandon fragile Sierra Leone

Despite British and UN help, Sierra Leone remains too fragile to go it alone

JUST four months ago Emmerson Bockarie was an unknown undergraduate in Sierra Leone. Then, in February, the musician released an album called "Bor Bor Belleh" (Fat Belly Boys), a reference to the corrupt officials popularly held to be hampering the country's development. The song caught Sierra Leoneans' imagination fast, and the album became a best-seller. From the outset, the singer-songwriter says he knew he had a hit. "It was what people were talking about, but didn't have the nerve to say openly."

Public cynicism about the inability of the country's leaders to rebuild this failed state is reflected in the virtual certainty that next week the UN will extend its mandate for a fifth time. Instead of going home on June 30th, as originally scheduled, a reduced force (currently 3,000-strong) will stay on at least until the end of the year.

06/24/2005 18:54:29

Gbagbo says he's 'done his job'

UNITED NATIONS, June 24 (AFP) - Ivory Coast President Laurent Gbagbo said Friday he had carried out his duties in tackling the crisis in his country, and that he was now waiting for other parties involved to follow suit.

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UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 26 June 2005

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International Clips on West Africa

VOA 25 June 2005

Analysts: Guinea on Brink of Crisis

By Gabi Menezes
Abidjan

Over the past 15 years, Guinea has been both affected by and involved in the wars in West Africa. Now, with a faltering economy and the health of the long-ruling Lansana Conte declining, analysts warn the country is on the brink of a crisis, which could once again destabilize the entire region.

An editor of a local newspaper, Mamadi Condi paints a bleak picture of life in the West African country of eight million people. Rising food prices and unpaid salaries have led people to protest month after month. Mr. Condi says people have no drinking water and electricity. Transport also doesn't function.

Faced with protests and foreign aid drying up, the Guinean president backed a reformist prime minister, Cellou Diallo, to undertake a series of political reforms, including revision of electoral lists. However, Mr. Condi says, these reforms remain largely on paper, and many Guineans are skeptical that they will ever be implemented.

Recent reports say the 70-year-old president, who has ruled the country for 21 years, is slipping in and out of a diabetic coma. Presidential elections are not due until 2008.

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