

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:

Wednesday, August 10, 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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Concord Times. Wednesday August 10, 2005.

"Special Court a Parliamentary err"

... Hinga Norman

Story: Tanu Jalloh

Special Court indictee and latest Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) leadership aspirant, Sam Hinga Norman in his declaration statement read on his behalf Sunday August 7 2005 at the party's 29 Rawdon Street office, revealed to his supporters that the Special Court was a mere parliamentary err.

"It is my firm conviction that Parliament erred in passing the Special Court Agreement, 2002 (Ratification) Act, No. 7 of 2002, in both the manner and the content of the legislation that actually ensued," he lamented adding that even as a layman he sees Parliament as not complying with the legislative procedures laid down in our constitution for passing a law which contains several provisions that are inconsistent and in conflict with entrenched provisions of our national constitution, even including some of our fundamental rights stipulations.

In spite of this apparent parliamentary howler and the subsequent establishment of the

said Court, Hinga Norman went further to insinuate that the actual essence of the United Nations backed Special Court for Sierra Leone is seriously and constantly being evaded.

"I sincerely believe, even as a layman of the law, that the legislative process by which the Special Court for Sierra Leone came into existence was a violation and a veritable contempt of our national constitution and therefore an affront to our national sovereignty," he maintained and continued "I was brought before the said Court purely for political reasons and in order to put me aside and out of the way in our national political process."

Though in detention, Norman however supports the court action taken against the party for according to him the matter was brought to the Supreme Court by people he described as true SLPP. He said the thrust is primarily in the interest of the Party and to its ultimate benefit that the highest Court in the land should rule on the issues raised before it.

Awareness Times. Wednesday August 10, 2005.

Norman's Candidature should not be overlooked.

When news first broke out that the former Minister of Internal Affairs and former National Coordinator of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, was going to vie for the leadership of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), it was simply dismissed as a joke, taking into consideration his current predicament as a detainee of the Special Court.

What was in essence perceived as a mere hoax, however, became a reality when on Sunday, August 7 2005 the detained 'war criminal suspect' declared his intent, by proxy.

Awareness Times was present at the declaration ceremony and judging from the turn out and sentiments expressed, one can safely conclude that, Chief Sam Hinga Norman commands an impressive support, not only from the southern and eastern provinces, but across the length and breadth of the country.

The fact that Chief Norman is highly respected by many of his followers who are of the strong conviction that his current predicament was borne out of a political machination, sends out a clear message that his candidature for the SLPP leadership, should be critically assessed and not merely overlooked.

The general thinking within this band of supporters is that, Chief Norman is suffering today because he did what he should have rightfully done in the defence of democracy and in consolidating the reign of the SLPP. Essentially, the people had concluded that Chief Norman is on trial for the sake of democracy and the party in particular.

This thought however, is being shadowed by an underlining perception that his indictment by the Special Court, was diabolical and was orchestrated by certain elements within the SLPP who see him as a threat to their chances of heading the party.

Although the authorities are clearly treating his candidature with careless abandon, observers are considering his intent with all the seriousness it deserves. What is worthy of note here is that, the circumstances under which Chief Norman has declared his candidature for the highest seat in the country, is unprecedented in the political history of Sierra Leone.

Never in the history of Sierra Leone had such a situation arose, and for that reason alone, due consideration must be given to the unfolding drama.

But while we patiently await the outcome of the forthcoming national delegates' conference of the party, we should also not lose sight of the fact that others in a similar position as Chief Norman, had won elections in the past.

Typical examples of this are Robert Mugabe of Zimbabwe and Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana.

These two African Statesmen, are said to have been in custody, from where they contested the polls and won. History will forever have it that, the two actually made good presidents for their nations.

If Mugabe and Nkrumah could make it, then there are the possibilities that Norman too can make it.

Let us therefore ask, should Norman by any chance, luck, blessing, or otherwise, win the polls, what will be the future of the Special Court?

This is important because the court cannot continue to keep in custody a popular choice of the people and expect to have a field day.

Let us also imagine that Norman comes out of the cells by virtue of the foregoing, what becomes of the other detainees?

Let us also again imagine that Norman loses the polls, what becomes of the SLPP?

There is this growing thought that members of the SLPP have moved from a stage wherein they will cast their votes based on party symbol. The individual is what has become the issue within the party we speed towards 2007.

The risk in that is hinged on the fact that should the SLPP present a candidate who is not the people's choice, the chances of the party suffering a major split, cannot be over-emphasized. This again, puts the spotlight backwards to the 1967 election. Will there be a repeat of that sad episode for the party? The answer is left for the SLPP.

Concluding therefore, this declaration of Chief Norman, should be given the desired consideration if the SLPP wants to keep its house together and face 2007 as a unified body.

The New Citizen. Wednesday August 10, 2005.

Special Court indictee and onetime Deputy Minister of Defence and also Minister of Internal Affairs, Sam Hinga Norman has given indications that he intends to contest for the leadership of the SLPP so as to qualify to contest for the presidency of Sierra Leone even though he is incarcerated in the cells of the United Nations backed Special Court.

Hinga Norman's candidature for the leadership of the



Hinga Norman in the good old days

SLPP and the support he enjoys within SLPP ranks can itself be seen as an indication that the indictment of Sam Hinga Norman is not a very popular move within SLPP ranks.

The courts will have to decide as to whether or not the state can allow an indictee to contest for public office but of course up to this point, Sam Hinga Norman is still to be found guilty of any of-

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fence

SLPP top brass who realize that the Hinga Norman issue could easily escalate into a political hot potato now suggest that Hinga Norman be given all the chances to exhaust his arguments within the framework of the law which can easily delay the Makeni convention

NORMAN

The SLPP party, in its bid to prove that it is internally democratic, has allowed too many people than necessary to declare for the leadership of the party

With the inclusion of Sam Hinga Norman, the SLPP now has eight leadership aspirants and if Hinga Norman was not in custody he could have given

even the best of the seven other candidates a real run for their money

Many Sierra Leoneans, especially those in the South and East of the country, still see Hinga Norman as a hero who helped to liberate the country and to restore democracy even though he now stands trial for alleged crimes committed against humanity

The Exclusive. Wednesday August 10, 2005.

Special Court indicted, and presidential aspirant for the SLPP, Chief Sam Hinga Norman, on Sunday 7 Au-

gust, 2005, formally declared his intention to run for the leadership of the SLPP and eventually the presidency of

Sierra Leone. The ceremony took place at the Special Court precincts, Jomo Kenyatta Road,

Freetown. In his nine page address, Chief Norman expressed regrets that he could only make

a seminal declaration rather than physical as a result of a conspiracy of circum-

stances." He assured his supporters that
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“ We Will Overcome...”

From front page

steadfastly, they will triumph because as he puts it, “ where there is a will, there is a way” Elected as the SLPP’s presidential candidate, Chief Norman promised to give the people of this country, a better life and future, and solicited cooperation from all and sundry to enable him lead the way to that success and prosperity.

He paid special tribute to the CDF whom he said, stood firmly by him in resisting the AFRC/RUF junta forces from over running the country and in the defence of democracy, for which he said, he was currently been detained and tried by a Special Court, the institution of which Norman pointed out, violates vital sections of Sierra Leone’s constitution.

He however expressed optimism that through the unflinching efforts of his lawyers including Dr Bu- Buakei Jabbe, he would in the not too distant future, walk a free man once more in the streets of the country.

United Nations



Nations Unies

United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 9 Aug 2005

[The media summaries and press clips do not necessarily represent the views of UNMIL.]

International Clips on Liberia

LAGOS, 8 Aug (AFP) - Nigerian has released three rights activists detained over a campaign to pressure their government to hand former Liberian leader Charles Taylor to a war crimes tribunal, Amnesty International said Monday.

"I can confirm that the three activists were released last week," a woman in the Amnesty International office in London told AFP by telephone, confirming Nigerian press reports.

Complete versions of the UNMIL International Press Clips, UNMIL Daily Liberian Radio Summary and UNMIL Liberian Newspapers Summary are posted each day on the UNMIL Bulletin Board. If you are unable to access the UNMIL Bulletin Board and would like further information on the content of the summaries, please contact Ms. Kadiatu Konteh at kontehk@un.org.

The Analyst

AllAfrica, Inc.
Africa News

August 9, 2005 Tuesday

Obstruction Of Justice - JPC Accuses Obasanjo, Abubakar, Chambas

Since the deposal of former President Charles Taylor in the aftermath of military showdown against his government, calls by the international community as well as some Liberians for his turn over to the UN-backed special war-crimes court in Sierra Leone have continued to prove futile.

His host country, the Federal Government of Nigeria headed by Olusegun Obasanjo, as well as authority of the Economic Community of West African Countries (ECOWAS), continues to resist and shield him from prosecution in line with an indictment of the special court that borders on his alleged role in the horrendous war in Sierra Leone. Both Nigeria and ECOWAS contend that turning over Taylor to the special court would be a betrayal of the spirit and intent of the deal that led to the former rebel leader's exit from Liberia. But the action is viewed by others as travesty and obstruction of justice, which in effect denies Taylor the right to prove his innocence. Mensiegar Karnga, Jr. reports.

Followers of the Liberian peace process and Sierra Leone's search for justice have no doubt that Charles Taylor is an indicted war criminal.

"The world knows it and many want him brought to justice. A diplomatic arrangement took Taylor to Calabar, River State, Nigeria, after he was pressed by rebel forces in Liberia. Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo in whose hands the international community entrusted the indictee is now adamant to let him go to Sierra Leone to face his accusers at the Special War Crime Court for Sierra Leone on multiple charges," they would say without hesitating.

But unfortunately all of these refrains have done little or nothing to change Nigeria's and perhaps ECOWAS' position on the Taylor question.

Many people have condemned Nigeria's refusal not to turn in Taylor, amongst them is the Executive Director of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission (JPC), Atty. Augustine Toe, who has accused President Obasanjo, ECOWAS Executive Secretary Ibn Chambas and ECOWAS facilitator, Abdulsalami Abubakar, of obstructing justice.

Before Toe's accusation, there had been a barrage of criticisms heaped on the Nigerian government for its reluctance to surrender a man who is considered by many as the most dangerous fugitive in Africa.

Time after time, human rights and pro-democracy organizations, as well as member states of the United Nations, urged and continue to urge President Obasanjo to see reason to turn over Taylor to answer to charges.

The world's superpower, the United States of America, and its allies have made their positions clear that Taylor must face the War Crime Court in Freetown, Sierra Leone.

But despite all the international pressure, President Obasanjo has always refused on grounds that the arrangement which led him to accommodate Taylor in Calabar was carved out by the very international community as the panacea to the civil imbroglio which Liberia was faced with.

The JPC however believes that the Nigerian President, ECOWAS Executive Secretary Chambas and Chief Facilitator Abubakar have committed some legal errors that amount to criminality as far as the principle of international justice is concerned.

Addressing reporters' questions during a JPC press conference, Atty. Toe said the refusal of the three personalities to ensure that Taylor goes to Sierra Leone to exonerate himself from the charges levied against him is not conducive for the global campaign against impunity.

During his last visit to Liberia, former Nigerian military ruler, Rtd. Gen. Abdusalami Abubakar said the human rights community was only focusing on taking exiled President Charles Taylor to court to face trial in Sierra Leone instead of speaking against major human rights issues that were tearing the society apart.

But responding to the ECOWAS chief facilitator's assertions, Toe said he was not surprised at Gen.

Abubakar's statement against human right institutions in the country.

He retorted that the West African authority was setting a dangerous precedent that has the potential to haunt the sub-region and its people in the future.

The JPC director said the action of Obansajo and ECOWAS would stifle the nation's recovery program, promote impunity and defeat efforts towards the establishment of the culture of rule of law.

The JPC boss said President Obasanjo, Gen. Abubakar and Mr. Chambas must be prepared to bear responsibility for the evil that comes out of Taylor's nefarious deeds if they succeed in their scheme to make Taylor evade justice.

He said if the three men are to escape the venom of history, they must ensure the surrender of Taylor to the war crimes court for the rule of law to take its course, as their continue refusal is tantamount to perpetuating criminality and chaos in the sub-region.

"Mr. Taylor's criminal activities in Liberia and the sub-region are no secret," Atty. Toe noted, adding that such act by one man to cause untold suffering to the peoples of the region should not be condoned by any government or individual.

He said it would be a costly mistake if Nigeria does not turn over Taylor to the UN backed War Crime Tribunal to account for his past deeds against the people of Sierra Leone and the sub-region.

Toe said he was worried that the culture of impunity in West Africa would blossom because African leaders don't seemed prepared to come out strong to fight against negative vices that continue to retard the progress of the continent.

From Awareness Times Newspaper in Freetown

POLITICS

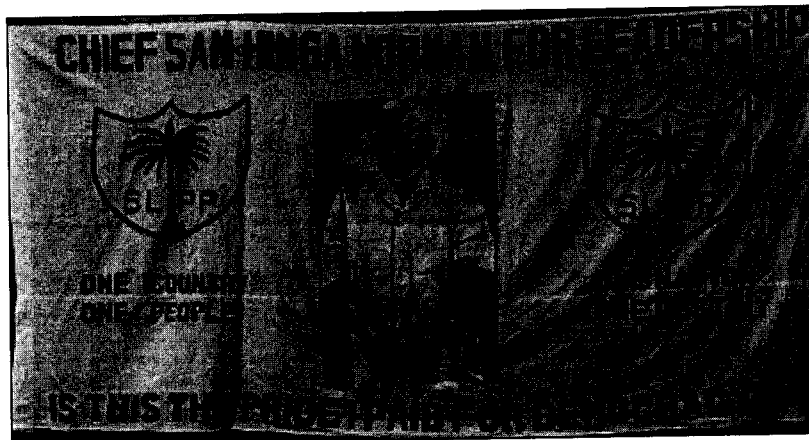
Hinga Norman declares by proxy in Sierra Leone

By Theophilus S. Gbenda
Aug 9, 2005, 22:39

Special Court detainee, former Minister of Internal Affairs and National Coordinator of the Civil Defense Forces (CDF) Chief Sam Hinga Norman, over the weekend, vested his interest in vying for the leadership of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP) and presidential candidate for the 2007 general elections.

Declaring by proxy at the party office last Sunday, Chief Sam Hinga Norman expressed regrets that he could not appear in person to declare his intention due to what he called 'conspiracy' of circumstances which according to him, is preventing him from doing so.

In the declaration statement read on his behalf by a former Civil Defence Commander, Duwai Mohamed Samu, Chief Norman, stated that he was vying for the leadership position because he believes he has the leadership qualities needed to take the SLPP party to higher heights and for the betterment of the entire citizenry.



Hinga Norman's campaign banner

Chief Norman maintained that, "there are a lot of good things in us as a people and in our resources as a nation, which, if given proper attention with good leadership vision and management, Sierra Leone will surely become a better place for all. The people will be much happier than they ever have been for the past several decades, since independence".

In view of the above, Chief Norman craved the indulgence of all well meaning Sierra Leoneans, with particular reference to the SLPP delegates to support his candidature and in so doing, give him the opportunity of leading the way to the success and prosperity of the country.

On his general life and preparation for leadership, Chief Norman stated that he is 65, and was born in Mongere village, in the Valunya chieftdom, Bo district in the southern province of Sierra Leone.

At age 14, Chief Norman said he was enlisted in the Colonial army, in 1954 and later volunteered to serve in the Royal West African Frontier force (RWAFF).

Eight years later, Chief Norman said, he again volunteered to serve in the first Sierra Leonean contingent of United Nations troops to the then Congo Kinhasasa, now D.R. Congo.

According to him, he had always taken positive actions in defending the country and in the service of the Sierra Leonean populace.

At the tender age of 27, Chief Norman said he ventured into his first nationalistic endeavour, in the defense of the country's constitution albeit as a soldier.

During the 1967 general elections, whilst serving as ADC to the Governor-General at State House, Chief Norman pointed out that he stood against the Governor General's attempt to stifle the constitution by way of arresting him.

Although his decision later landed him in custody, Chief Norman however stressed that his action sent out a clear message to the Colonial masters that they cannot continue to treat the country's constitution with disregard.

Chief Norman further disclosed that his current detention by the Special Court for alleged war crimes is simply as a result of his selfless defence of the land.

According to him, he has contributed in his own little way to save the country from a protracted blood letting of the people. "I stood strong and always ready to save this country from the scourges of injustice, poverty and backwardness", he said.

The declaration ceremony was graced by representatives from the four regions, including former CDF commanders and SLP stalwarts.

The ceremony was also graced by RUF representatives and wives of the detained AFRC members.

The general consensus at the ceremony was that Chief Norman is a hero and that he can make a good president.

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD THE ENTIRE 9-PAGED SPEECH IN PDF FORMAT](#)

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Media Rights Agenda

AllAfrica, Inc.
Africa News

August 9, 2005 Tuesday

Security Agents Release 2 Detained Printers, Continue Hunt for Human Rights Activist

On 4 August 2005, Nigeria's intelligence agency, the State Security Service (SSS), released from custody two printers, Steve Omali and Michael Damisa.

The printers had been arrested on 1 August at the Nnamdi Azikiwe Airport in Abuja after being found in possession of advocacy campaign materials printed for the Coalition Against Impunity. They were released on bail along with Damisa's brother, Matthew Damisa, who was also arrested on 1 August when he went to visit his brother at the SSS Headquarters in Abuja.

Omali and Damisa were found with copies of a "Charles Taylor Wanted" poster which they had reprinted at the request of the Coalition. The group is campaigning for former Liberian President Charles Taylor to be extradited to Sierra Leone to stand trial for war crimes for which he has been indicted by a special court. He was granted political asylum by the Nigerian government in August 2003. The poster was a reproduction of the "Interpol Red Notice" for Taylor issued in 2003.

The SSS did not release the 10,000 copies of the poster which its agents had confiscated when they arrested the two printers.

The SSS, however, is continuing its hunt for Chidi Anselm Odinkalu, the senior legal officer for Africa at the Open Society Justice Initiative (OSJI) office in Abuja. Odinkalu is one of the leaders of the Coalition.

Two security agents visited the OSJI office on 2 August in search of Odinkalu, saying they had instructions from SSS Director General Colonel Kayode Are to bring him to SSS headquarters for questioning for allegedly sponsoring the printing of the posters. The security agents subsequently paid repeated visits to the office but have not found him. They have reportedly kept the OSJI premises under surveillance in their search for him.