

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 31, 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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Peep. Wednesday August 31, 2005.



Kabbah: knew of atrocities



Narcissa: law unto himself



the CDF militia committed numerous atrocities and developed bad blood with army

Kabbah knew about CDF atrocities:

Primary Findings

262. The SLPP Government of the conflict era was a government under siege. It came to power amidst a bloody civil war and was consumed with defending the people from attack and finding ways to end the war.

263. Its actions were meant to bring the war to an end. However, some of the actions were ill-conceived and, thereby, led to violations and abuses of the rights of Sierra Leone.

264. The Commission finds that the leadership of Government had knowledge of CDF violations and abuses and, to the extent that such leaders were in the chain of command, they are held responsible.

265. The Commission finds the SLPP government responsible for carrying out the arbitrary arrest and detention of a large number of citizens in violation of their constitutional rights from 1998 onwards.

Many of the arrests, detentions, the prosecutions and trials of this period were politically motivated, representing a denial of their basic rights.

The Commission finds that the Court-Martial of 37 soldiers of the SLA, during 1998 and which resulted in the execution of 24, was conducted in contravention of international human rights standards.

266. The Commission finds that the current incarceration of sixteen persons in "protective custody" detention since June 2000 to be unlawful and a flagrant denial of their basic human rights.

Main Findings

Complacency upon Taking up the Reins of Government

267. The newly-instated SLPP government did not rise to the challenge required for the management of the war effort in 1996.

It failed to heed the lessons of its predecessors or to address the emergent threats to state security that existed within the SLA.

In several respects, the government served to entrench the endemic disaffection of the conventional security forces.

Responsibility in the Breakdown of the Abidjan Peace Accord

268. The government miscalculated in its negotiation strategy at the Abidjan Peace Talks of 1996.

It displayed a diplomatic naivety in making several key military concessions to the RUF whilst demonstrating an over-reliance on the goodwill of the international community for implementation of the spirit of the consequent Peace Accord.

Mismanagement of the State Security Apparatus in the SLPP's First Year in Office

271. The SLPP government was remiss in allowing such a high degree of ambiguity to develop around the

dual role of Chief Sam Hinga Norman as Deputy Minister of Defence and National Co-ordinator of the Civil Defence Forces.

Most soldiers perceived Hinga Norman's role as being highly partisan in favour of the CDF.

The failure on the part of the executive to address these negative perceptions in the military contributed significantly to the military coup of 25 May 1997.

272. The down-sizing of the Army and the commensurate reduction in rice rations by the government was badly handled. At a time when transparency and trust should be at a premium, the government practised neither.

Failure to accurately diagnose the symptoms of discontent among the soldiers of its national Army was a recurring blight on the authority of the government. It was a costly failure of the nation as a whole.

273. The Commission finds that President Kabbah misjudged the seriousness of at least two warnings of alleged coup plots from those in his military High Command. The implicated persons in these alleged plots subsequently proved themselves to be genuine threats. The president's failure to address the concerns of his Deputy Minister of Defence, Chief Sam Hinga Norman, on 16 May 1997 resulted in the coup that ultimately unseated the President and caused untold suffering for the citizens of the country.

Management of the State Security Apparatus during Exile and Beyond

276. The disagreements and mutual distrust between President Kabbah and Chief Sam Hinga Norman on the management of the war effort impacted negatively on the Movement to Restore Democracy.

277. The War Council in Exile established by Presi-

dent Kabbah struggled to assert its mandate indeed, the War Council's efficacy depended largely on the extent to which its direction converged with Hinga Norman's own views.

278. Nonetheless, the Commission finds that the War Council and the President were fully and timeously apprised of events that were taking place on the ground in Sierra Leone during their period in exile.

They did not act to stop the violations being carried out by CDF elements nor did they speak out against them. As such, they are held responsible for the acts of their agents on the ground.

279. The failure of the pro-government forces to halt the AFRC advance on Freetown in January 1999 represents a blunder on the part of the government of Sierra Leone and ECOMOG.

Both parties had multiple prior warnings of the impending disaster.

Their joint neglect and poor analysis of the situation culminated in the wanton destruction of Freetown by bands of thugs and hooligans.

Knowledge of CDF Atrocities

283. The Commission finds that the government was aware of human rights violations and abuses carried out by the CDF, through the role of its Deputy Minister, Chief Samuel Hinga Norman who served as CDF National Co-ordinator and members of the War Council at Base Zero. The government was further kept informed through its Security Committee briefings and through reports received from ECOMOG, but failed to take steps to stop them. The Commission, accordingly, holds the government responsible for the violations and abuses of human rights committed by the CDF.

**UNMIL Public Information Office Media Summary 30 Aug 2005**

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

International Clips on Liberia**LIBERIA: Presidential candidates divided over what to do about Charles Taylor**

MONROVIA, 29 August (IRIN) - Candidates vying to be Liberia's next head of state are divided about whether to ask for former president Charles Taylor to be transferred from exile in Nigeria to stand trial for war crimes committed in Sierra Leone.

International Clips on West Africa**South Africa calls halt to mediation role in Ivory Coast**

by Fienie Grobler

PRETORIA, 30 Aug (AFP) - South Africa's foreign ministry Tuesday called a halt to its role as peace mediator in strife-torn Ivory Coast, saying it was in "no mood" to consider new demands from rebels threatening to boycott October elections.

"We think the time has come ... that the mediation's role by and large has now concluded," South African Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz Pahad told reporters in Pretoria, saying the United Nations and African Union (AU) should take over.

No peace in Ivory Coast without solution to nationality problem: rebel leader

ABIDJAN, Aug 30 (AFP) - Peace will not return to the West African nation of Ivory Coast unless the issue of who is allowed to claim citizenship of the country is settled, the head of rebels opposed to President Laurent Gbagbo said Tuesday in a letter to UN Secretary General Kofi Annan.

The 10-page document, by Guillaume Soro of the rebel New Forces (FN), recalled the history of former governments that promoted the notion of "Ivorianness" -- under which a popular leading politician from the mainly Muslim north was prevented from running for president.

Local Media - Newspapers

STAR RADIO *(News culled from website today at 08:30 a.m.)*

International Elections Monitors to Visit Liberia Shortly

- Election monitors from the National Democratic Institute, the Carter Center and the International Republican Institute will shortly visit Liberia to conduct a pre-election assessment mission. The delegation will meet with a full-range of electoral stakeholders in Monrovia and other parts of Liberia.

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.